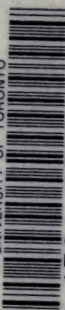


THE
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C. F. A.

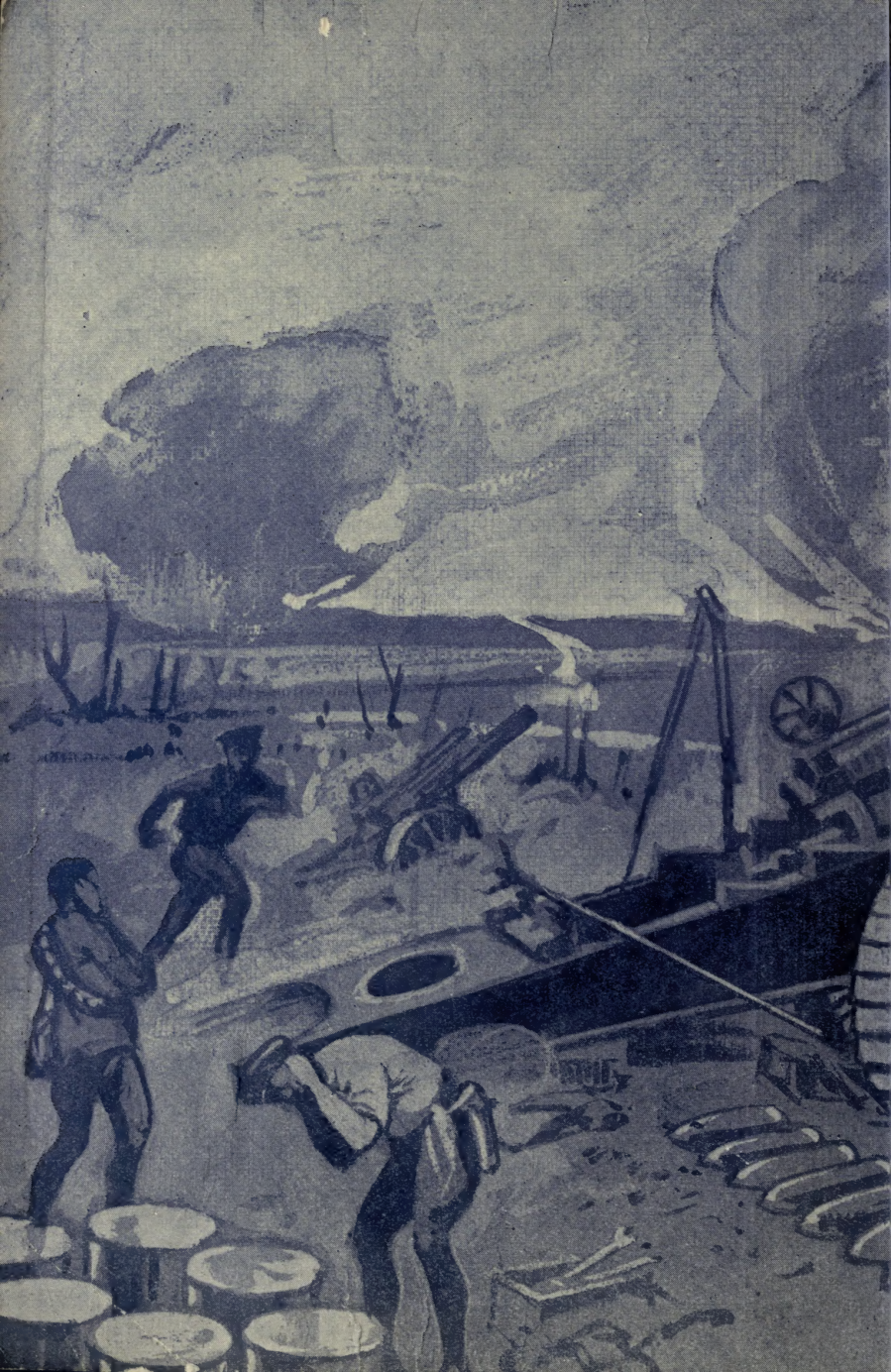
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The
Fifty-Fifth Battery
C. F. A.



MAJOR V.J.KENT
(KILLED IN ACTION)



MAJOR A.S.DAWES



MAJOR C.B.HILL

The History of the Fifty-Fifth Battery, C. F. A.

COMPILED BY
D. C. MacARTHUR

PUBLISHED BY
H. S. LONGHURST

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1919

TO
OUR FALLEN COMRADES

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Foreword.

OUR Battery was made up of men from widely scattered parts of our country, due in part to its peculiar formation of three sections, each from a different unit. As a result, any compact association of its members is well nigh impossible, but there is another tie which holds us together. That tie is the memories that each man treasures of the part he played in the War as a member of the 55th Battery, C. F. A. While war itself is abhorrent to all of us, and army life to most, still even from evil much good can be brought forth. The cheerful unselfishness that prevailed in time of danger; the true valuation of a man as a man, and not as Grit or Tory, Presbyterian or Methodist—these are things we may well carry on into our civilian life.

We still look back on our Division with pride, certain that the Purple had no stains to mar its military record; and, coupled with this, the knowledge that we have made good friends among the civilians of France and Belgium with whom we have been quartered. Even among our former enemies we feel that our memory will not be discredited.

This record of the Battery only touches on those events which concerned the unit as a whole. Each, we hope, will serve to revive those more interesting personal recollections common to every man, and if it shall do that its duty will be done, as we have planned it.

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History of The 55th Battery, C. F. A.

CHAPTER I.

Early Training.

IT was in the late Fall and Winter of 1915, and in the Spring of 1916, that most of those units which later made up the 5th Divisional Artillery were recruited. The various artillery centres, of which Toronto and Guelph concern us most, were full of activity, bringing Batteries up to strength, and giving the men what training they could before the big artillery camp should open at Petawawa. The streets resounded to the jingling spurs of natty young artillerymen, whose sharply pegged breeches, tailored tunics and clean-shaven features caught many a bright eye, and betrayed their pride in their new profession—that of serving his Majesty's Guns, until the war should end and for six months after. Every ambitious gunner had a budding moustache in those happy days; he twirled a riding crop in his gloved hand, and he wore the ten-pocket bandolier and heavy jack-spurs as though he really believed they meant something. Such was the rookie, proud in the depth of his ignorance, stern in his notions of military duty.

The 55th C.F.A.

Brand new subalterns, fresh from the Artillery School at Kingston, spilled out their knowledge of gun-drill and foot-drill, driving it home with the same withering sarcasm that had but lately been vented on themselves. Newly-made Sergeants and Corporals, full of lofty and patriotic fervour, thundered out orders and did guards with Spartan severity. Every morning the civilians were offered amusement as the procession of numnah riders wound along the streets, bouncing from one side of their horses to the other, their faces fixed in an expression of suffering and despair, their hands clenched firmly in the numnah-lock. Those were the days of P. T., of long runs before breakfast, when the warped tones of an embryo trumpeter called us up in the early hours of dawn.

The batteries from which our three sections were later made up were the 48th, a Toronto battery of the old 12th Brigade, the 55th, a Guelph unit, and the 56th, which was called the "O. A. C." Battery, and which was recruited mostly from students of that college and their friends.

At the end of May all the batteries then in formation, from the Atlantic to the Pacific, gathered together under canvas at Petawawa. It was the biggest artillery camp that Canada had ever seen, and Petawawa, in spite of its defamers, was in many ways an ideal location for it. The air was dry and healthy, the water supply was good, and the broad, sandy Ottawa offered excellent swimming. The wide plains provided ample room for manouvers and firing practice, and for many a long

Early Training

canter. In short, it was a healthy life, if a strenuous one, with little to distract from the work of training, and we left it in better shape physically, and as soldiers, than when we first pitched tent there. We answered the cook-house call on the run, with appetites worthy of giants, and when the assembled trumpets of the brigade blew "Last Post" from the hill we slept the sleep of the righteous, rolled in our blankets on the sand. We had one big inspection at Petawawa by the Duke of Connaught, after a week of practice, which dust, sand and lack of water bottles made a sore trial to body and spirit.

The 12th Brigade was the first to leave Petawawa, on August 26th. They detrained at Amherst, Nova Scotia, and spent two pleasant weeks there, waiting for the rest of the Division. Not a little of the left section's mail has borne the Amherst postmark as a result of those two weeks. The 14th Brigade, containing the 55th and 56th left Petawawa on September 8th, and was on the Halifax docks on the morning of the 11th, and below decks on the same afternoon. After two days lying in Halifax Harbor, the convoy steamed out, the "Metagama," the "Northland," the "Cameronia," and the "Scandinavian," convoyed by the cruiser "Drake."

The voyage overseas was uneventful, so far as submarine activity was concerned. The sea was not in bad temper, but choppy enough to keep a good number sticking to their bunks, suspected of swinging the lead by sceptical Sergeant Majors (provided they were not sick themselves). The

The 55th C.F.A.

grub was nothing to write home about, but kept up life in those men who were hardy enough to eat. Physical training, boxing tournaments and guard duties helped to pass the trip, which lasted for eleven days. Some hundred miles off the Irish coast we were met by a destroyer patrol, and as these efficient and speedy little boats curved in and out among the lumbering transports we felt secure in the hands of the Navy.

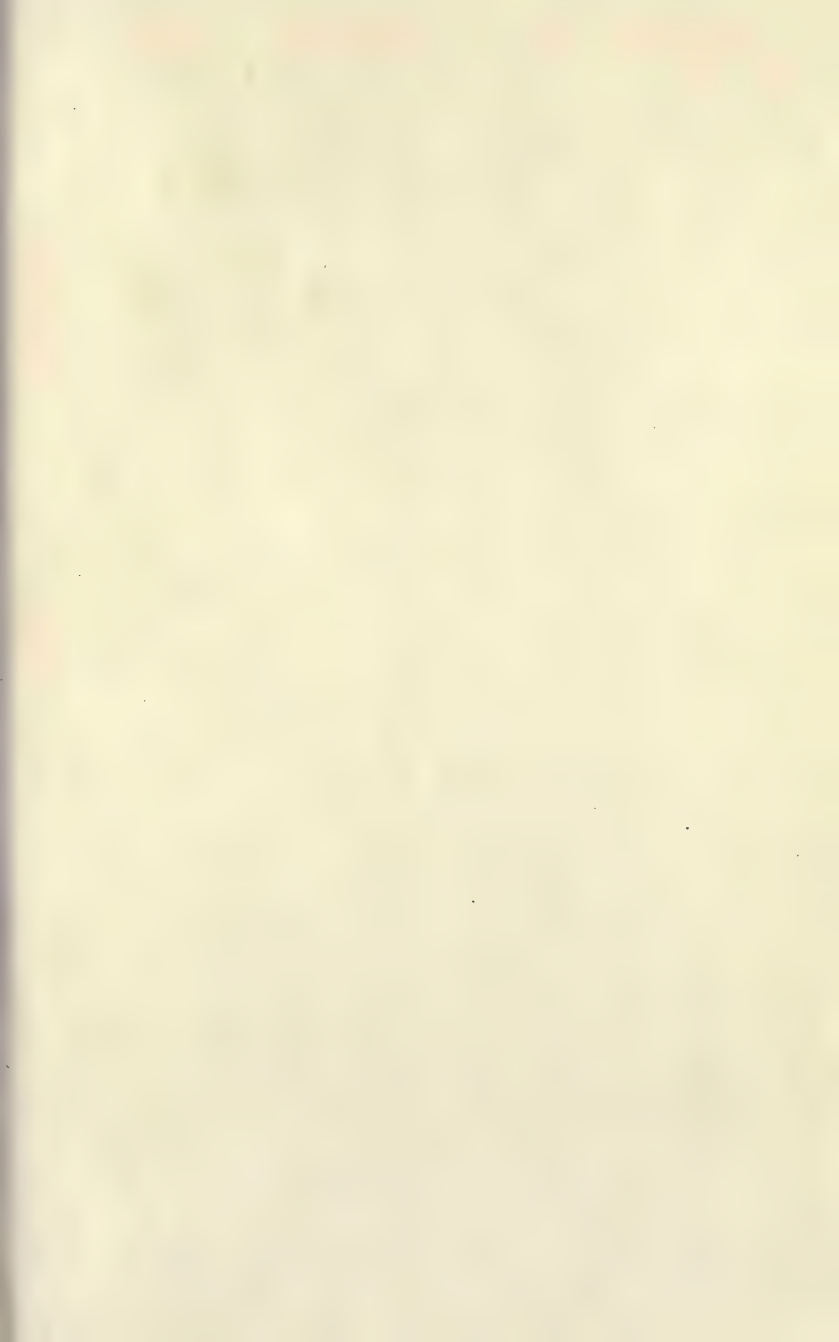
One morning we woke up to find the coast of Ireland moving by on our right, its green hills showing dimly through the mist. We curved around, through the Irish Sea, and close by the towering cliffs of the Isle of Man. Considerable excitement was worked up as to who would be the first to dock at Liverpool, but the "Cameronia" proved to be an easy winner, with the "Metagama" second. It was on the afternoon of the 23rd that our convoy steamed up the Mersey, with strange craft on every side, and Canadian eyes had their first glance of Merry England. The rows of red tiled houses and lack of tall buildings looked curious at first, but the cheers of boats full of people out holiday-making made us feel that we were at least stepping on friendly shores.

Long troop trains, whose little coaches and small engines looked like toys to us then, were waiting by the dock. We marched to them from the boats, loaded down, as we used to be in those days, with a heavy blanket roll, two kit bags, a haversack or two, and Heaven knows what else. We squeezed into the little compartments as best

Early Training

we could, and were soon whizzing through a pitch black England in pitch black coaches, for raid restrictions were in full force. But no one had much sleep, for there was too much howling and yelling going on to let the home of our forefathers know that their sons had returned to the fold.

At Birmingham we had hot tea and sandwiches at the station. About four in the morning we detrained at Witley, to the tune of an industrious coster, who had "Ripe gripes" for sale, and marched to the camp, through English lanes and by English cottages which we were too tired, at that time, to notice.





ROSIE'S.



"B" AND "C" SUB GUN PITS, LIEVIN.

CHAPTER II.

Witley.

WITLEY Camp was in the midst of the Surrey hill country, a district famous for its beauty. Looking down from the Gibbet at Hindhead on a clear day the country seemed to be a great forest, though in reality it was networked with fine roads and full of towns and villages. The villages themselves were old and quaint, with their venerable grey churches and little cottages, thatched and ivy-covered, set in their flower gardens. Every village boasted one or more inns, according to its size; "Red Lions," "Half Moons," "Angels," and "Kings Arms," havens for the thirsty wayfarer.

The troops at Witley Camp lived in groups of wooden huts, thirty men to a hut. Each man had a wooden "cot" and a paliasse, and a portion of shelf for his effects. An Orderly Officer inspected the hut each morning, and the "hut orderly" was responsible that the place was clean and every man's bed, blankets and kit were as the law required.

Before the winter every man had his landing leave, and our horses and guns had arrived, the latter from Vickers & Sons, the first fresh from their native fields. Training was commenced in

The 55th C.F.A.

earnest. Section gun-drill, gun-laying, driving-drill and signal practice kept every one busy from five-thirty (reveille) till the supper at five in the afternoon. By January 1st, 1917, we were ready to go to Salisbury Plains for ten days' firing practice, which was duly carried out to the complete satisfaction of the inspecting officers in spite of mud, wind and rain. It is a matter of high dispute as to whether the 81st Battery (old 48th) or the 56th headed the Division for shooting record.

On January 22nd a general reorganization of artillery came into effect, splitting up the four gun units. The right section and Signallers of the 56th O. A. C. Battery were added to the 55th, with Major V. J. Kent of the 56th as O. C. of the new unit. This caused a lot of heart burning at the time, but was never any cause for regret after the battery went into action. We were now in the 13th Brigade, C. F. A., comprising the 51st, 52nd, 53rd and 55th Batteries, all eighteen pounders excepting the 51st, which was a 4.5" Howitzer.

In March the 12th Brigade went to France. One section of the 81st was in quarantine at that time, so a section of the original 55th was sent in its place. This gave the 55th a section from the 81st, one from the 56th and one from the old 55th. And so it continued. By the time it left England it was moulded into one unit, outside of some friendly inter-section rivalry, notably in baseball.

Spring and Summer at Witley brought fine weather, with many bivouacs and divisional manœuvres. The winter had been unusually cold and

Witley

damp, with nearly every one sick, and the hospitals were overflowing. In April the 5th Canadian Division was formed, complete in every respect, under General Garnet Hughes. Unfortunately, only the artillery survived to uphold the honour of the Purple Patch in France, but we feel certain that our infantry, as it was at Witley, would have done no shame to the Corps' Record. Infantry, artillery and engineers all worked together in manouvers, culminating on the terrific "battles" of Midhurst, Liphook and Frensham Ponds. Mud, rain, very late suppers and lack of sleep made this campaign as bad as active service, if not worse. Our bivouacs at Petworth and Horsham were much more pleasant affairs, treking through the pretty Surrey and West Sussex country. On the Horsham visit half a dozen would-be criminals were caught in the desperate act of staying out after ten o'clock. They were put under close arrest and forced to march twenty miles back to camp. They might have been seen for a week later applying whitewash to the stables.

Many of the boys who had previous experience as farmers in Canada were allowed to take their teams out on English farms. Here they found the work an agreeable change from army routine, with meals that were worthy of their appetites, and so in a way we helped to offset Fritz's submarine campaign, which was then at its height.

The rations at Witley were never anything to go wild over. The printed menus supplied by some stool-warmer to the cooks sounded very imposing, but the "Country Sausage," "Hungarian Goulash,"

The 55th C.F.A.

or "Canadian Fricasse" usually turned out to be one and the same variety of greasy hash. In consequence the Y. M. C. A. and Salvation Army huts did a roaring trade in coffee and buns. Both had fairly good canteens, and the "Y" provided frequent concerts, usually very good. Its big warm stoves and writing facilities were much appreciated in the winter. The hut stoves were of an antique design, greedy of coal and chary of heat, and as the coal issue was never large various underhand methods of keeping up the supply were resorted to, and also, we regret to say, in obtaining "buckshee" bread from the cook-house.

In spite of gun guards, picquets, cookhouse and a hundred and one other fatigues we had many a good time in Guildford, Godalming and other towns not far from the camp. The Kitchener Club at Godalming provided dances, and there were others at Shalford for those who chose to brave the perils of M. P.'s, a conscientious and stony-hearted crew in those days. Wealthy people of the district financed weekly concerts at Godalming of excellent musical and vaudeville talent. It will always be pleasant to remember the kind and hospitable way in which the English people of the district treated us, and many of the boys have made firm friends there.

Punting up the little river Wey was also an agreeable business, with a fair partner or two, for those who were practiced in the art. Cycling was another favorite pastime, due to the excellence of English roads and the inexhaustible choice of beautiful and interesting trips that could be made.

Witley

Machines were in great demand for week-ends and holidays.

By July we had resigned ourselves to our fate as garrison artillery in England. The Division had been inspected by Premier Borden, the Duke of Connaught, and the King and Queen. We were becoming a little stale, for there was not much in the matter of training that we had not had our fill of. But early in August we were warned for France. We were ready in every way, as far as training and equipment was concerned, in fact, it is doubtful whether a younger, better trained division of artillery ever crossed the Channel.

We embarked at Southampton on August 20th, 1917, men, horses and guns. The Channel was calm, and the dawn of the 21st showed us the harbour and cliffs of Le Havre. Our ship went in with the tide. We disembarked without delay, and marched up to a rest camp close to the city.

All the papers were full of the Canadian Corps' latest victory, Hill 70, and we had no doubt that we would be thrown at once into the fighting around Lens, which at that time was the fiercest on the whole front.

CHAPTER III.

Into Action.

AFTER two days rest in the rest camp at Le Havre, we entrained for our trip to the Canadian rail-head, Lillers. This was our first introduction to French box-cars, which served equally well for "40 Hommes" or "8 Chevaux," as conditions demanded. We spent the night on the train, getting what sleep we could, and made one stop for watering the horses, when the cooks made us hot tea. The train reached Lillers the next morning, a hot, sunny August day, with the white dust of Picardy floating over everything. We were soon ready to move off, and before long the battery was clanking along the unfenced roads towards our new quarters.

At noon we halted for dinner. Our digestive system was just becoming seasoned then to bully and hardtack, cheese and jam. We could even tackle a machonochie stew with considerable relish.

By evening we were in Amettes, a small, pleasant village, and billeted around in various stables and lofts, some with bunks and others with straw to sleep on. Our horse-lines were in a field with a little stream close by, very handy for watering. At night we could hear the rumbling of guns

The 55th C.F.A.

towards La Basse and Lens, and this, with the far-off flocking of "Archie" shells, made us feel that we were not far from action.

The French country side was pretty at that time, just after the harvest, and new and interesting to most of us. The fields were small and unfenced, with the cattle tethered in the pasture. The red-roofed, whitewashed cottages were gathered into one straggling village around the communal church. Houses and barns were always close, and very often one building, with a large manure pile in the courtyard. The women and girls worked in the field like the men, from early in the day till dark.

Here, too, we made our first acquaintance with vin rouge and vin blanc, champagne and that villainous mixture sold as beer. Venders of French chocolate, sold in large bars, did a big trade, as well as the "Estaminets," a new word, which soon became a part of our vocabulary.

General Currie, the Corps Commander, paid the brigade a visit at Amettes, and expressed his satisfaction with the batteries, commenting especially on the youthfulness of the men. He also intimated that artillery was playing a much needed and dangerous part at Lens, where the enemy was making things unpleasant with mustard gas.

A few days of showery weather soon made our horse-lines a sea of mud. It was almost knee-deep, and the horses were in a terrible mess. The mud had to be shovelled daily into heaps behind them. In the middle of this we were inspected by General Morrison, Canadian Artillery Commander,

Into Action

on a field several kilometres away. We took no greatcoats, and a rain storm soaked everyone to the skin, but we were inspected and passed as ready for action—which, God knows, was preferable to more inspections.

The horse-lines had now become impossible, so we moved our animals to a dry piece of road, stretching ropes between the limbers. This was a great improvement.

Lieut. Benallick and a party were sent up the line on a "Cook's Tour," to visit the battery which we would relieve, and to become as well acquainted with the new positions and the front itself as the time permitted. Gun pits, dugouts, communications and roads were particularly important. In a few days they were back, loaded with information about the "War," and without any casualties, to our great surprise.

On the morning of September 4th we began our trek "up the line." It was a warm, dusty day, very pleasant for traveling. We passed through Lillers. At noon we were at Marles-les-Mines, where we stopped to have lunch and to water and feed the horses. After dinner we went on, through Barlin and Hersin. The lack of traffic, despatch riders, and so on, on the roads surprised us, also the quietness of the front, for we knew war then only through the eyes of the correspondents. Well on in the afternoon we reached Boyeffles, a small farming village, in the midst of the Lens mining district. Tall fosses and cone-like slag heaps could be seen on every side. A battle between some

The 55th C.F.A.

enemy "Archies" and one of our planes was going on over the front, and we watched excitedly as the little black puffs spotted the sky, expecting the plane to fall any minute—which proves the depth of our ignorance, expecting an "Archie" to hit anything.

Our new quarters were in a small fosse, then unoccupied, and not working, with a small woods on one side. There were no stables to speak of, but the place had plenty of bunks in it, so we put up our horse lines and turned in for a good night's sleep.

The next day, September 5th, the headquarters Party, with Captain Kerr, went up to the new position. The whole outfit marched, or straggled, into Cite St. Pierre in full view of Fritz from Sallu-Mines Hill. How he missed such a chance for sniping is uncertain—beginners' luck, perhaps. In the evening one section brought their guns up and changed over without any mishaps. Luckily the sector was enjoying a spell of quietness. The rest of the guns, with their crews, came up the next night, and the 55th Battery was in action for the first time, and responsible for its particular bit of the Western Front.

CHAPTER IV.

Cite St. Pierre.

CITE St. Pierre, where we first saw action, was a mining town on a rise of ground overlooking Lens, which was in a big basin. The place had once been a model city of workmen's brick cottages, each with its bit of garden, but the recent fighting had transformed it into a mass of twisted iron framework and brick ruins. The most prominent landmark was Fosse 11 de Lens, a modern structure of steel and brick, but now torn and shattered beyond hope of repair. The St. Pierre church was no more than a heap of masonry, with one high piece of wall left standing. Back of the town was Fosse 16, not so badly mauled as Fosse 11, but the object of almost daily shelling.

Hill 70, a chalky, desolate ridge, lay in front. On the right extreme was Lens, and on the left Loos, a little mining village where many thousand men had died. The left of St. Pierre was Maroc, full of our heavy guns; a piece of country named "Happy Valley" lay between the two towns. On the right, on another hill, was Lievin, formerly a big mining centre, and the Bois de Riamont, now a collection of rugged spikes that had once been trees.

The 55th C.F.A.

Behind Lievin was Colonne, another nest of heavies.

Our new position was just to the right of the main crossroad in St. Pierre, which formed a big triangle. The four gun-pits, constructed of "elephant iron," sand bags and camouflage, were in a row along a small gravel road, which had a hedge on each side. The crews, officers and signallers lived in cellars in the nearby demolished houses. Piles of bricks, rails, legs and rubbish made these little vaulted wine cellars fairly bomb-proof. All were fitted with gas-curtains, for gas was Fritz's most effective weapon against the artillery, as we were soon to find out.

Things went quietly at first, so that we had time to accustom ourselves to the new conditions. An aeroplane sentry was on duty all day watching for hostile aircraft, and a gas sentry at night, listening for the sliding whistle and soft "plup" of gas shells. About a week after coming in Fritz must have noticed some unusual movement in our area, especially near the corner where our cookhouse was. One day at noon when we were lined up for dinner, he opened up with 4.1 H. E.'s and sent us sprawling, a mass of men, bricks and hot stew. Everyone scattered to the dugouts, and the strafe continued all afternoon, inflicting our first casualty, Bdr. Plant, our cook, who was wounded. As everyone was curious then to know "where that one landed" we were lucky to escape so lightly.

When we first came in the sector was held by Canadians, whose raiding activities were keeping

Cite St. Pierre

the papers supplied with news. Our S. O. S. range was about 3600. Besides this we had several retaliation targets, chiefly on enemy mienenwerfer positions. Before very long preparations were begun by the Corps for a new attack on Lens from the right, on the Mericourt sector. We sent a large working party to build what was called the "pip" position, which we were to occupy for this show.

But the fighting near Ypres had developed into such a stubborn and sanguinary battle that all other operations were cancelled. All the Corps, with the exception of our own Division, went North, where they later won the battle of Passchendale. We were probably left at Lens because our experience had been so short, but, at any rate, we have every reason to be thankful for missing the Northern fighting amid terrible conditions of mud and rain.

Meanwhile, we stayed in our position in St. Pierre, first in support of the 6th Imperial Division, later the 11th. The front was quiet, yet active enough to continually increase our experience of trench warfare. In our relations there with the Imperial troops we always received excellent treatment, and were on the best of terms. When we left them to go back to the Corps they were very hearty in their acknowledgment of our artillery support, which increased our confidence that the 5th could uphold its name with any artillery in France.

Bombardier Maclellan, of "C" Sub, was the first member of our Battery to fall in action. He was killed instantly by a shell on September 20th.

The 55th C.F.A.

On the evening of September 21st we answered an S. O. S. about 9.00 o'clock. The gunners pulled through and went back to their dugouts. Everything seemed quiet again. But Fritz had planned his revenge on our artillery. Our flashes had told him that Lieven and St. Pierre were full of guns, and about ten o'clock he began a gas barrage that lasted for two hours and soaked the whole locality with mustard gas. Gas shells of every calibre up to the big 8-inch "Donkey Engines" rained down in shoals. "B" Sub gun had a direct hit, and eight men went to the hospital the next day as a result of handling the gun. All the telephone wires were cut and the signallers had a busy night. It was our first soaking with gas, and we had our fill of it, too.

The Battery itself was silent; that is, fired only S. O. S.'s and retaliations. We had one forward gun and one rear gun, which did the night firing and sniping in the day time. The sniping at enemy movement within our range was directed from the O. Pip (Observation Post), which at that time was in Fosse 11. It was while on duty there that Bombardier J. H. Winslow was mortally wounded, dying in the dressing station on October 14th.

Due to an unfortunate exposure of bright green camouflage against a brick wall, Fritz's attention was attracted to the locality of our forward gun. He straffed it so severely that although no one was hurt the gun had to be moved back to a new place at once. A dummy gun-pit full of ammunition was blown up, and "S. D.." (the signaller's dugout) was

Cite St. Pierre

badly pounded. Fritz continued to straff this position regularly for a couple of weeks, so that it kept his attention away from the real battery, and really did us a service.

As time went on we made our cellars into well furnished and comfortable little homes. Salvaging expeditions provided chairs and tables, mirrors, grates, built of bricks and clay, gave a cheerful and homelike touch. Most of the boys slept on bunks of wire netting, but more ambitious ones had civilian beds, and French spring beds head the list for softness and comfort. A 5th Division Y.M.C.A. canteen was established in a cellar near Fosse 16 corner, and kept us well supplied with every kind of Canadian canned goods and cocoa and chocolate. The officers, signallers and centre section gunners each had a small portable gramophone, whose efforts were much appreciated in such surroundings. Taken altogether, we led not a bad life, and what hardships there were were made easier by the friendliness and good-fellowship that prevailed in the Battery, and the square theatment meted out by Major Kent.

Like true soldiers, we soon became as lousy as pet coons, in spite of applications of creolin, sabodilla, Keating's and various other insect powders, but fortunately for our sleep and comfort there was a division bath at La Brebis, some six kilometres in rear, where a clean change of clothing could be got, and if the palm of the bath man (a Scottie, alas!) were oiled with silver a brand new set was forth-

The 55th C.F.A.

coming. The bath was sometimes scalding hot and often freezing cold, and perhaps the trickle only lasted for two minutes—but, for all that, it made life much better for us. Bully-Grenay and La Brebis were well supplied with canteens, estaminets, and egg-and-chip emporiums, so that the trip for a bath was quite a holiday. A meal of steak and chips, or a French omelette, washed down with champagne, made an agreeable change from ordinary cookhouse fare.

The life of the drivers at the Boyeffles waggon-lines was no round of pleasure, although they had neither gas or shells to bother them. There was a nightly trip up to the guns with rations and mail, but no ammunition to be hauled, as the narrow-gauge railways handled it. "Thank God for the narrow-gauge," was the drivers' proverbial prayer. Substantial stables of corrupated iron, tar and various salvaged materials were put up for the winter, with brick footings. Here the horses were fairly comfortable, and grew long, shaggy coats that would have graced a grizzlie. Stable parades, exercise rides, and the eternal harness cleaning made up the monotonous round of a driver's life. The quarters were cold, and always full of smoke from the attempts of some would-be fire-maker. Between cold nights, early reveilles, rusty harness and machonachie breakfasts, it is small wonder that the drivers' tempers were soured, and that they developed a flow of language worthy of cow-punchers.

The several social centres of the district, "Rosie's," "Queenie's," "Fernand's," and others



"A TOUCH OF LOCAL COLOR."



OUR BILLETS IN LIEVIN.



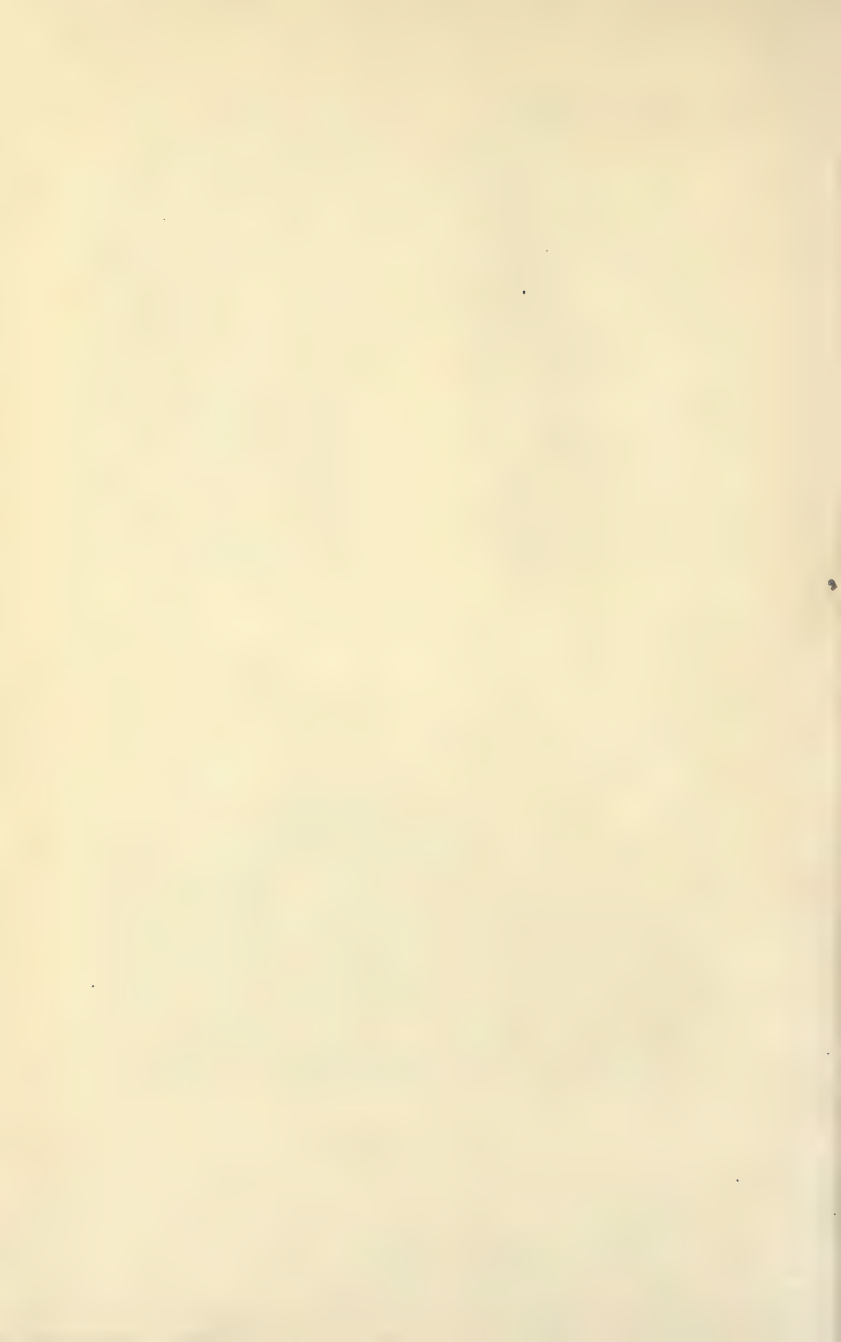
"BULLY GRENAY" CORNER.

Cite St. Pierre

were available for a few days after pay day. There one might drown his sorrows in anything from champagne to vin blanc, depending on the state of pocket of the sorrowful one. One-day passes were available to Bruay and Bethune, the biggest towns within riding distance, where there were plenty of stores, pastry shops and concert parties in the big theatres.

Big preparations were made for Christmas, 1917, both at the guns and waggon lines. It was found impossible to procure a sufficient amount of fowl, so a couple of fat young pigs were bought instead, and good roast pork garnished with apple sauce needs no apologies from anyone. Big Canadian mails had been coming in, and there was no lack of fruit cake, raisins, nuts and every other Christmas delicacy. The signallers had their blow-out on Christmas Eve in their dugout, "Iona," and still look back at it as the merriest Christmas they have known. The rest of the Battery celebrated on Christmas Day proper. December 25th, 1917, will always be a pleasant day to remember in the unpleasant business of war.

The rest of the Corps, after a month's rest, had come back to their old sector, in front of Lens, and the Fifth was taken back into the fold.



CHAPTER V.

From Lievin to Vimy.

BUT we were not destined to hold our comfortable position in Cite St. Pierre, which we had come to regard as "home," for much longer. The Third Division quite naturally wanted to have their own artillery behind them. There was a report, generally believed by the infantry at that time, that the Fifth had "shot short at Passchendale, a dastardly offence, surely, had we not been on the Lens front all the time. But every new division had its share of "kidding" to take, its share of lying rumours to live down, and we were no exception.

So we received orders to move to Lievin, changing position with a Third Division battery. The new place, known as the camouflage position, or the "Beer-garden," was on the outskirts of the town, back of the Bois de Riamont. The six gun pits of elephant iron, and sandbags, were under one big piece of green camouflage, together with the control pit and dug-outs for the crews—all joined by a duck board walk. It was New Year's Day when we moved into this place, with snow on the ground. It covered the camouflage as well, but we had forebodings as to what would happen when the

The 55th C.F.A.

sun came out and exposed a long strip of grass-green on the snow for Fritz's planes to look at.

However, we only stayed a few days at this position, which was lucky, for Fritz pounded it unmercifully some time later. Major Kent had selected a new place on the other side of the town, towards St. Pierre, with the gun-pits in a piece of old trench. There were plenty of ruined houses nearby, whose cellars would make good quarters for everyone. One gun was put forward in a row of houses some six hundred yards ahead. The range here was 5400 yards, firing at an angle, on the Hill 70 front.

The life at the guns here was much the same as it had been in St. Pierre. The cellars were square, instead of being vaulted, and were soon made comfortable, furnished with everything that salvaging expeditions could glean. The signallers found a new "Iona," bigger and more comfortable than the original one. They had a long line to maintain to "Aurora" O-Pip on Hill 70, but luckily buried cable was available for most of the way.

There was an old cement Hienie O-Pip at the Battery itself, which was manned at night by a guard, watching for S. O. S. flares and signs of gas. The main O-Pip was "Aurora," about four hundred yards behind the front line, which we had built in November with our own working parties, aided by Australian tunnelers. The upper part was covered with cement, with a slit on the level of the ground, which overlooked Cite St. August, the Carvin Road and the country behind. Below was a forty-foot dugout with bunks for three signallers and an



NARROW GAUGE BEHIND "ARRAS CUTTING." OLD COOK HOUSE IN FOREGROUND.



BATTERY OFFICE, ST. PIERRE.

From Lievin to Vimy

officer. The look-out was kept up day and night, watching for enemy movement in the day time and for flares and gun-flashes at night. When any movement within our range was spotted by the observer—as, for example, party of Hienies on the Carvin Road—the forward gun was called up and did its best to spoil the party by the use of H. E. and time shrapnel. Various spots where movement was frequent were kept and registered, with range and degree of switch from the zero line, as “Target A,” “Target B,” and so on.

The waggon lines were still in the Fosse at Boyeffles, and the life there was still as we have described it in the last chapter.

The gunners were kept busy improving the gun-pits, even to the extent of painting them red and white inside. It was desired to have them “5.9” proof, and so the original pits were built up with bricks, sand bags, rails and logs, until they were all too easy to spot from a distance. This led to the position being nicknamed the “Mountain Range.” “B” sub pit was “Pikes Peak,” and “F” sub “Cave of the Winds.” Towards the end of February Fritz appeared to become worried about this unusual series of crests and peaks, and spent a morning registering on us, putting out all the telephone lines but doing no other damage. Previous to this, he had been fairly quiet, putting only occasional “Wooley Bears” over Lievin, big black shrapnel whose loud bark was worse than their bite.

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Canadian infantry was always in front of us, and kept Fritz's nerves on edge with continual night raids. Several were on a large scale, for which we helped to lay down the barrage. Fritz was at this time advertising his coming offensive, trying to get the Allies' wind up, and every precaution was being taken on the Canadian front in the matter of defences. Trenches were improved, and new ones dug. Mile after mile of new barbed wire was laid down, even around the gun positions. Every battery was supplied with two machine guns in case the enemy should break through. Elaborate plans were drawn out to prepare for retreating from one line of defence to another, and we prepared positions in Colonne and Bully-Grenay in case we should be forced back.

On the morning of March 4th at six o'clock a tremendous roll of artillery from the enemy lines startled everyone. Gas and H. E. began to fall in great quantity on Lievin and areas well back of the trenches. It looked as though his offensive had really begun. All the telephone communications were soon cut, and it was impossible to lay wire under such severe shelling. Although we had received no firing orders from Brigade, Major Kent began an S. O. S. barrage without hesitation. After some time, the enemy's fire on the forward area slackened, though he still continued to pound the battery locations. The Major, unwilling to expose his men unnecessarily, and always anxious on their behalf, went from pit to pit, seeing that each crew left for the control pit, a deep and bombproof dug-

From Lievin to Vimy

out. Just as the last man went in an N. C. O. called to the Major, "You'd better come down, sir," to which the Major replied, "Oh, I'll be all right." A moment later he was killed by a shell which detonated in the trench beside him.

The loss of Major Kent was a sore blow to the Battery. In training days he had been a strict officer, eager to see his battery become an efficient and disciplined unit, but in France the welfare of the men under him was his continual thought, combined with a desire to see his guns give service that no infantry could complain of. And so he died, a gallant soldier and a gentleman, as no doubt he would have wished, in the heat of action.

The Major was buried with full military honors in Aix-Noulette cemetery, beside Bdr. Winslow and Bdr. McLellan.

Soon afterwards, on March 15th, we were relieved by the 25th Battery, and pulled out for a rest, our first since going into action. Our rest area was to be Marles-les-Mines, a mining town between Bruay and Lillers.

CHAPTER VI.

Fritz Has His Turn.

NO sooner had the Battery moved into Marles-les-Mines than Fritz proceeded to bomb the place. This was our first serious experience of the kind, and we lost three horses killed and several wounded. The picquet had a close call, one being slightly wounded.

We were favored with fine weather, and the hilly French country side was showing the first signs of spring. Most of the men had good billets with the civilians. Brigade sports were organized, courses were started in signalling, map reading and scouting, and all signs pointed to a profitable few weeks of rest.

But the Fates, with Fritz's help, had planned differently. His much-heralded offensive was launched on the 21st, from Arras to the Somme. Canadian divisions were thrown in at Arras, and held the northern end of the push in check. Our own guns went back into action immediately on the old Lens front, into a position not far back of our first one in St. Pierre. Our waggon-lines were again at Boyeffles. While at this position the new O. C. took command, Major A. S. Dawes, with Captain C. B. Hill replacing Captain Allan Kerr, who had gone to the Artillery School at Witley.

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Our stay in St. Pierre was short, with the front quiet. On the 29th we had read to us on parade General Currie's famous order. Things were apparently at the most serious crisis of the war, and we were to move to new scenes of fighting, as we imagined then, for some kind of a Canadian "last hope" affair.

So we pulled out our guns, culled our kits down to bare necessities and were on the road the next day. The day was wet and dull, and we had a long hike. In the afternoon, tired and foot-sore, the Battery pulled off to the side of the road, on the wide plain which lies between Mont Saint Eloi and Vimy Ridge. The country was new to us, as well as the more open style of warfare, and we had a faint notion that we were somewhere just behind the front line. The plain around us seemed full of waggon-lines and guns of every calibre. Everything, so we thought, pointed to a "show."

It still rained, and everyone was wet, tired and miserable. Tarpaulins were spread out to form a shelter of some sort. After supper the guns went up into position, but not until the battery had been fortified with a generous rum issue. The "S.R.D." was appreciated then as it never had been before, even though it did lead some of the horses and limbers into the deep shell holes of Vimy Ridge.

All this concentration of artillery, it turned out, was only for defensive purposes, to overawe any designs the enemy might have on Vimy Ridge, which had cost so many lives already. His observation balloons were always up in large numbers, and

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apparently noticed this unusual movement in our lines, for he never attacked on this particular sector. On March 21st and 22nd he had driven the line back several thousand yards, capturing Monchy-les-Preux, a high, bald hill, which overlooked all the country behind Vimy. Arras had been heavily bombarded, and the civil population had been forced to flee.

Our guns were in a bit of trench, beside one of the plank roads which traversed the Vimy slope. With what material they could get the men built gun-pits and splinter-proof dugouts in the trench, covered with "elephant iron" and bags. The rain made the place a pool of sticky red mud, which gave it the name of the "Mud Position." It was some time before we could get a bath, and the lice made life miserable, at night time especially. There was nothing near the place to please the eye. The barren, shell-torn fields of Vimy stretched away on every side, with a few spikey trees and telephone poles running along the top of the ridge. Fritz shelled here and there with heavy H. E., but it was blind shooting and did so little harm that we usually hauled up rations, water and ammunition in daylight.

We had two forward guns just by the top of the crest. There was never much sniping to do, for there was none of the movement of the Lens front. Altogether we had a quiet, monotonous stay at this position, an air fight, or a balloon brought down in flames causing occasional excitement. The only touch of natural beauty was the sunset, when

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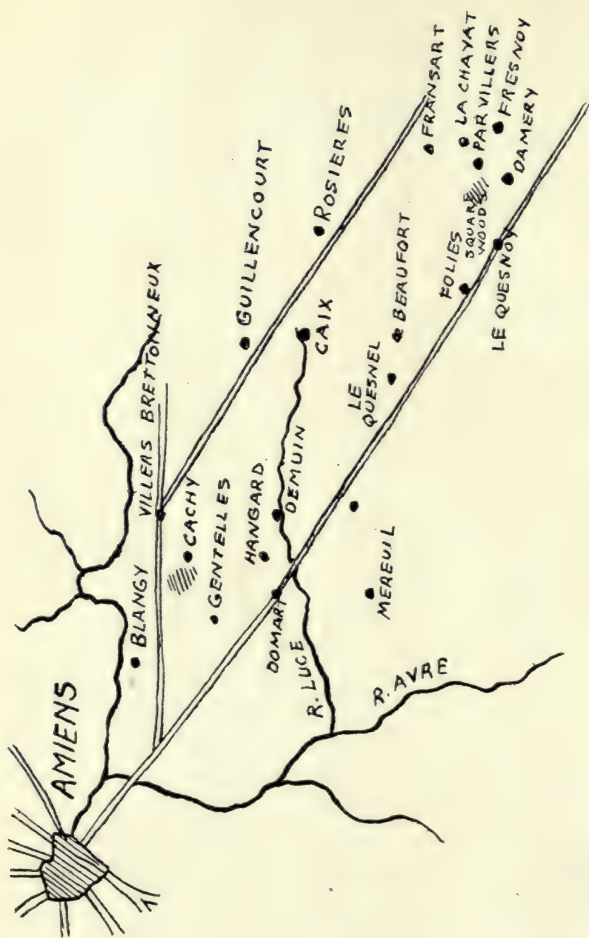
the last rays would gild the ancient ruins of Mont Saint Eloi Cathedral far behind us.

Our O-Pip "Claud" was on the top of the ridge, in a cement German gun-pit with a dugout beneath, which made a comfortable home, though crowded. Here the signallers did their shifts, and tried their hand at fried bully or beefsteak and onions. O-Pip bill-of-fare was generally very good eating. A good deal of bartering went on with the infantry for coke, charcoal and other commodities, rum being the universal medium of exchange.

The complete disintragation of the British Fifth Army added greatly to the burden of the troops holding the line. The Canadian front now extended from south of Arras to Hill 70, and every battalion had to put in long and tiresome turns "in the line." Infantry and artillery were both suffering from the dreary monotony. Fritz appeared to be victorious on almost every front, and while we still hoped for his ultimate defeat, the "morale" was not very high. We began to watch the growing numbers of the American army with interest.

Meanwhile, better waggon-lines, with huts and stables of corrugated iron, had been found on the Arras-Bethune road. These were not as immune as the Fosse at Boyeffles, for Fritz did a lot of random firing with "toute-suiters," a shell which was liable to drop in at any time without warning.

On April 12th we took a new position in front of the Vimy Monument, firing on the Mericourt front. We had "elephants" for the guns, crews and control-pit. A section was put forward in Vimy



Fritz Has His Turn

village, at the foot of the ridge. A new O-Pip, "Cockatoo," was established on the slope of the ridge over Farbus Woods, with another cement gun-pit to sleep in.

Life at this position was very monotonous, living from meal to meal and hoping for a Canadian mail to come in. The front was fairly quiet, and the shelling never bothered us a great deal, as most of it was on Thelus Woods and the forward part of the ridge.

One big raid was staged on our sector, and we moved another section up to the forward gun positions. For some reason or other this raid was not very successful, and after it was over the guns were brought back to the Monument.

Spring had come now, but Vimy Ridge showed few signs of the great awakening. What trees there were were splintered and dead, and the vegetation seemed dry and pale, like the chalky shell holes. Everyone was longing for a change, and when, early in May, the news came of a move back on rest it was welcome in the highest degree.

CHAPTER VII.

A Breathing Spell.

FRITZ took a parting shot at our waggon-lines with his "toute-suiters" as we pulled out, scattering stones and chunks of chalk, but injuring none. A. R. F. A. Battery relieved us at the Monument on the afternoon of May 5th, and that night, at eleven o'clock, we began our trek to the rest area.

It was a dark night, and everyone was very sleepy. Drivers dozed off in their saddles, and the gunners, sound asleep, lay sprawled over the limbers. The signal-light for our bombing planes, at Barlin, shot its beam into the sky with tiresome regularity. In the grey light of dawn we passed by Houdain, switched to the left, and halted at the little village of Beugin.

Beugin lay on the side of a wide valley, a kilometre and a half from Houdain. It was made up of red-roofed, whitewashed cottages and farm buildings, like so many other French villages, gathered around the village church. But spring had laid its hand on the country, and our eyes, which for so long had seen only the ugly desolation of Vimy, were delighted with these new scenes. The Houdain country is full of rolling hills and wide

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valleys, with many woods and little fields of every shape and shade of green. Sunny days followed one after the other, and the Battery never seemed so contented with life as it did during our stay at Beugin.

The horse-lines were in an orchard beside the road, with a stream of clean water at its foot. The men's billets were in barns, some with bunks and others with straw. Training in open warfare tactics was commenced without delay. When Colonel Hanson told the assembled signallers that they must train to keep up communications for an advance of ten miles a day it sounded like a fairy tale. The Battery went out on manouvers, at first alone, and later in schemes in conjunction with the infantry. The whole Corps was being given a thorough training in open warfare, and whipped into the maximum of physical fitness. We had an inkling that big doings were ahead, and everything suggested that the Canadians were being fashioned into a spearhead of attack for the Allied Army.

Eggs and chips with fresh milk abounded at Beugin, and the boys waxed fat. Fritz was shelling Bruay, but Houdain was a fair-sized town, with an E. F. C. canteen and the theatre of the "Rouge et Noir," the excellent troupe of the First Army. It was at Beugin that our travelling cookhouse arrived, which saw so much good service afterwards, presented by the "Ladies Auxiliary of Guelph." (Those that have understanding let them understand.)

A Breathing Spell

The Battery had one inspection at Beugin by Sir Arthur Currie, who seemed well pleased with the turnout, in spite of short notice. We were still reserve artillery, and had emergency positions picked in Bethune, Noulette and Colonne, which fortunately we had no occasion to use.

There was a Chinese Labour Company quartered at Beugin, big, good-natured fellows, but full of curiosity about such personal articles as gold teeth which amazed them exceedingly. They had a fatal craving for bully-beef, for which they offered tempting prices. The Chinese wore a baggy blue cotton uniform, crowned with every description of hat that French shop-keepers could work off on them.

There was a big pond near the village, which had been a stone quarry. This made a first-class swimming pool, of which the boys made good use.

But this care-free existence only lasted until May 22nd, when we moved out, and after an all-day march reached Savy-Berlette, where we passed the night. The next day right section and signallers went up the line with the Major, and by night had two guns in action, relieving the 7th Battery, C. F. A., on the Arras front. The Centre and Left Sections went into action on the night of May 24th.

CHAPTER VIII.

The Cutting.

OUR new position was beside the Arras-Lens railway cutting, with the guns concealed behind a hedge, and the men living in the cut itself in dugouts and "elephants." We were on the right extreme of Vimy Ridge, about five kilometres from Arras, and firing on the Gavrelle front. The country had improved in appearance since we left for Beugin, and while it was by no means beautiful the millions of poppies, corn flowers and buttercups relieved its general ugliness. Just in front of us the line bent sharply back, both right and left, the result of enemy offensives south of Arras and at La Bassee. The line of observation balloons up every fine day showed this big salient clearly. Our best protection from attack was the long line of high ground held by us—Vimy, Lorette, Hill 65 and Hill 70. The valley of the Scarpe, which ran by Arras, was the most open point, and it was on this sector that we were firing.

The Canadian Corps was either in training or in reserve behind the line, excepting the Second Division, which was in action south of Arras. Our guns were supporting the 15th and 51st Highland Divisions, both famous for their fighting records. The Scotties adopted us as "their Artillery," and

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the Purple Patch has always been welcome in Glasgow and Edinburgh as a result. They even undertook to "fall out the Jocks" in defence of some Fifth Division men in a Y. M. C. A. line-up. We were proud to support these Scotties, and we shall always remember them as first-class fighting men, and the best of good fellows. They paid our waggon-lines many a visit, going home after a "wee drap" at Moriul, and even tried a hand at baseball, with plenty of spirit, if they did lack in technique.

Our horses were in stables and the men in huts, but Fritz still made things lively with his "toute-suiters," directing his guns from Monchy and Orange Hill. There was fine grazing for the horses in the fields around Anzin, and water supply at the stables. But finally things became too warm to be pleasant after the 53rd beside us lost several killed and wounded, so the waggon-lines were moved to the Mont St. Eloi Road, close to the Moreiul corner. In a few days a small village of "bivvies" was standing, with a big harness and feed room in the centre of the waggon-lines. The only drawback to the new place was the long distance from water, the three watering parades taking up a good part of the day. The weather was fine, and the "bivvies" were not bad homes, and most of the afternoons were free. Mareiul had several canteens and estaminets, and eggs and chips were available. French newsboys brought us the "Daily Mail" every afternoon, so that we could follow the events on the other



HILL 70 AND OLD BRICK HEAPS IN BACKGROUND.



"THE CUTTING"—FOSSE II.

The Cutting

fronts. Fritz's efforts seemed to have been checked everywhere, and the Italians had dealt the Austrian offensive a heavy blow.

General Dodds, commanding our Division, inspected our waggon-lines here, and we headed the Division for cleanliness of horses, harness and vehicles.

Corps Sports were held on Dominion Day, July 1st, at Tinques. Quite a number went from the Battery, hopping lorries on the Arras-St. Pol road. It was a bright day, and an enormous crowd attended. The Corps Troops (to which we belonged) stood second among the divisions.

Life at the guns was fairly quiet, and as monotonous as usual. Fritz shelled us now and again, being particularly spiteful against an "Archie" battery behind us, for which we took a good deal of punishment. Our forward gun was farther along the cutting, to the right. Fritz made life miserable there with a nightly gas strafe, though the battery itself was not bothered a great deal. We helped in the barrages for several successful raids, for which the division was thanked later by the Highlanders. "Horse-shoes" was the popular sport at the guns, with applying for a transfer to the Air Force a close second.

Late in July the Corps went into the line again on the Arras sector. We imagined after its long rest and intensive training that a "push" was not far away. But at the end of the month rumours

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of a Corps move were in the wind. An unusual degree of secrecy prevailed; one thought this and another that, but no one knew anything with certainty. Mont Kemmel and Rheims were favorites with the prophets.

CHAPTER IX.

The Battle of Amiens.

THIS time an Army rumour proved to be true, and we were relieved at the "Cutting" on the 30th by a battery of the 52nd Imperial Division. Fritz kept up his gassing to the very last. The Battery was packed and ready to move on the 31st, and at 10.00 o'clock that night pulled out for Savy, where the Brigade was to entrain. The night was exceptionally clear and moonlit, and the Gothas were very active. Their presence, however unwelcome, at least kept us from growing sleepy on the long trek. Travelling by the Arras-St. Pol road, we reached Savy at dawn, and got guns, horses and equipment on the train waiting there.

About two o'clock we passed through Amiens. A few kilometres farther on, at Saleux, we stopped and detrained, and after watering the horses started out for Cagny, where the Brigade was billeted. Luckily we reached the place just before dark, and got our horse-lines established in a small woods there. The whole district was swarming with troops of every description—French, Australian, Imperial and Canadian, all carefully concealed in villages or in woods. Cavalry, tanks and artillery

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of every calibre poured in daily. Every sign pointed to a big show, bigger than anything we had yet seen.

Three days of heavy rainfall had made conditions very muddy and miserable. In spite of this, every man in the Battery had to take a turn at packing ammunition nearly twelve kilometres to a gun position just behind the front line. Luckily the front was quiet, and Fritz had no idea of the tremendous amount of movement going on. There were no casualties, except to horses, but it was a long and tiresome trip, ankle deep in mud. On the night of August 7th our guns were moved into position in a wheat field, with their gun crews and the headquarters party.

Zero hour was at 4.20 a.m. True to the second, our artillery tore loose with a deafening concussion. Thousands of guns of every description poured out what was probably the most concentrated and terrific barrage the war had seen. Following the barrage came our infantry with hundreds of tanks and whippets, and a thousand yards behind them the Second Division of artillery with horses and guns. The whole battle moved like clockwork, not a detail forgotten, from the lorries loaded with bridge parts to the observation balloons, which moved steadily forward. The dawn of August 8th presented a wonderful picture of war—"Movie" war we would have called it a month before. Ambulances driving through the grey battle smoke; long lines of infantry moving forward, and prisoners straggling back with

The Battle of Amiens

stretchers; tanks and whippets lumbering ahead, and squadron after squadron of cavalry, jumping wire and trenches, their pennants flying, the Bengals, the Scots, Greys, the Strathconas. Long lines of field guns stood naked in the fields, stripped of camouflage, the shells whipping out over the heads of the wheat, and the gunners unprotected behind them. And overhead our planes were always busy, machine-gunning the retreating enemy and dropping messages at the headquarters at Domart.

The battery ceased firing about six o'clock, and Horning dished up breakfast. In the afternoon we moved into a valley near Domart. Two days later, after an early reveille, we moved forward again. The enemy's old front line looked like a ploughed field, a testimonial to the terrible effect of our barrage. We were in the forward area by noon. The enemy was still retiring towards the little village of Parvillers.

The 32nd Division of Imperials had just gone into action, and we went in to support them on the run, kits and equipment flying in all directions. We got into action within machine gun range, and as the infantry were held up had to retire to a position beside a piece of trench.

It took two weeks of continual and severe fighting to drive the enemy from the old 1916 trench and wire system at Parvillers. Our infantry lost many men from the enemy's concentrated machine gun fire, the Royal Scots battalion being practically wiped out. The night bombing was unceasing, and at our waggon-lines near Folies we lost one killed

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and six wounded in one night, besides a large number of horses and mules.

We moved our position forward twice before we were relieved by the French. The hot weather and the numerous dead lying on the battlefield of Parvillers made conditions anything but pleasant. We moved out on the night of August 21st and rested a day near Domart. Another all night march brought us to Saleux, where we rested a day and then entrained. On the 24th we were back at Savy, and spent the night marching down the Arras-St. Pol road to Stewart Camp, close to Arras. No one knew it, but we were on the verge of another of the war's great battles, the storming of Monchy-les-Preux.

CHAPTER X.

Monchy and the "Wotan" Switch.

OUR sweeping success in front of Amiens had filled everyone with confidence, and higher hopes than we had ever entertained before. But we hardly expected another big battle to follow so closely on its heels. Most of us imagined that we would have a rest or a turn at some quiet sector. But Marshal Foch had his own plans, and the Canadian Corps still had a big part to play in them.

Another such concentration of artillery was effected in front of Arras as there had been at Amiens. Our battery was detailed to supply a section to follow the infantry in close support, to pick up opportunity targets. Zero hour was at three a.m. August 26th, and all objectives had been gained by seven-thirty. Owing to the smoke and dust our section was unable to do any direct firing, though they got rid of a good number of shells on the retreating enemy. But their chief duty was to inspire confidence in the infantry, for there is no sweeter sound in an advancing infantryman's ear than the metallic crack of an eighteen-pounder close behind him. Fritz kept up a hot shelling, and both horses and men had some remarkably close calls.

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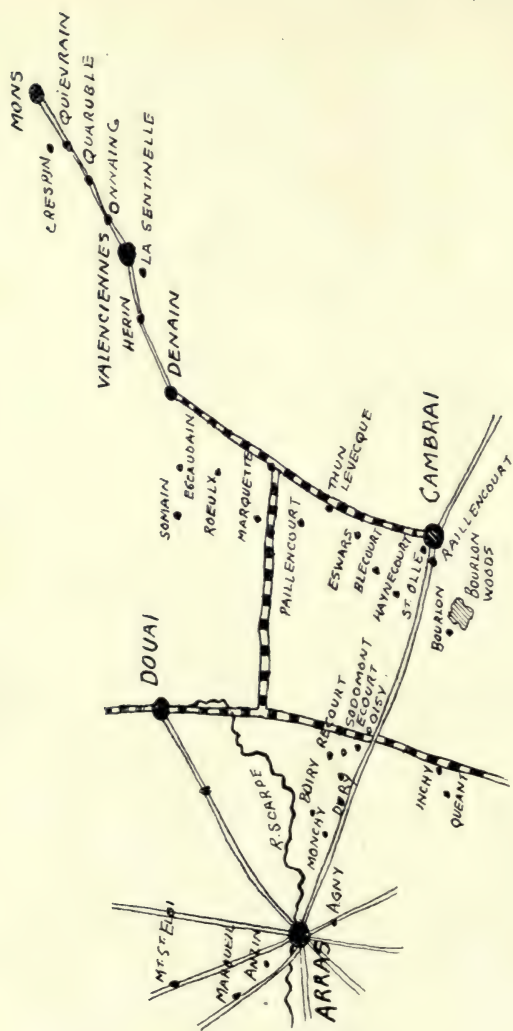
Only one man was wounded, Bennet of "C" sub. Lieut. Benallick commanded the section, while Lieut. Wilson, with Signallers White, Robinson and Munro, kept up liaison with the battalion ahead the 5th C. M. R.'s.

At dawn the rest of the battery came up over the old trenches and wire, where hastily constructed bridges had been built. We took up a position on the lower slope of Orange Hill, guns in the open and men sleeping in bits of trench and shell holes. The day had been dull and wet, and though the enemy's infantry had been forced back, his artillery still seemed very active.

On the evening of the 27th we moved forward to the crest of Orange Hill, making our way with difficulty in the dark by trenches, huge shell-holes and barbed wire. We took over a commodious cement dugout, which had been an artillery observation post. Doubtless his observers had directed fire from there on our old waggon-lines, for it commanded a beautiful view of them. The place had the heavy, unpleasant smell characteristic of German dugouts, clothes and equipment, but we were getting used to that, and the cement looked good.

Two guns went forward in front of Monchy. Unfortunately they had to go up on short notice, and were without rations for a day. Except for rare occasions like this our food and mail came with praiseworthy regularity, even in the hottest fighting.

The Battery had an exciting afternoon on the 29th. An urgent S. O. S. came in on our O-Pip line



Monchy and the "Wotan" Switch

at five o'clock. We had been firing heavily all afternoon, and were almost without ammunition, though the limbers were expected at any minute. But in an S. O. S.—probably an enemy counter-attack—every shell counts, so all available men were set at carrying up old ammunition from gun-pits that had been vacated in March. These rusty old shells fed the guns till the limbers trotted up with a fresh supply. The counter-attack was a failure.

On the 30th the Battery moved forward, ahead of Monchy, to a trench that had been our front line in the Spring. The two centre section guns were out of action, at ordnance with wornout bores. The men had trench bivvies to sleep in, with the control pit in a deep dugout.

On the night of the 31st we moved forward again, to a position in front, and to the right, of Boiry. The guns were in the open, as they always were now, and the men found what shelter they could in shell holes and deserted Hienie "bivvies."

The drivers led a very busy life these days, continually moving the guns forward and hauling up ammunition from the dumps to the gun positions. The narrow gauges did well to keep the forward dumps supplied, with the help of motor lorries. Fritz had the roads and cross-roads by map, and while most of his shooting during retreats was blind, he made things lively at times for the traffic.

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Our infantry were now faced by the famous Drocourt-Queant Switch, the "Wotan Line," a formidable system of wire and trenches, joining up with the "Hindenburg Line." Once past this and the Canal du Nord, Cambrai and Duai would be within our grasp.

CHAPTER XI.

To the Canal Du Nord.

THE attack on the Drocourt-Queant Switch began at four o'clock on the morning of September 2nd. The 1st and 4th Canadian Divisions went over the top, supported on the flanks by the 4th and 11th Imperials. The fighting was fierce but successful, the steady stream of walking wounded testifying to its stubbornness. At 11.00 a.m. we moved forward, through roads crowded with wounded and prisoners, to a position in the centre of the famous switch itself, just behind Dury. Our infantry were just over the crest in front, and our guns were well within machin-gun range. Two hundred and fifty prisoners were taken in one dug-out in a quarry at Dury. The signallers made a big haul of revolvers and binoculars from this place, though the locality was a little too warm to make souvenir-hunting a pleasure.

Early in the afternoon Fritz suddenly dropped an area barrage on our position. All those who were in the open scurried for shelter to the closest trenches and a handy cement pill-box. Lieut. "Blondie" Wilson and Sergt. Guardhouse, unfortunately, were caught a little distance behind the guns looking over a stranded tank. Both were wounded

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by the same shell. Sergt. Guardhouse, hit in the face, managed to get safely to the pill-box. On hearing that Lieut. Wilson was lying seriously wounded under the tank, two signallers, White and Glendenning, ran out and brought him in, in spite of the shelling, which was still very heavy. The wounded were dressed temporarily in the pill-box, and as soon as possible got to a Field Dressing Station, where ambulances were always waiting.

Before evening the battery was able to move out, and took up a new position in a piece of trench farther to the left. Fritz was apparently anxious to clear out several ammunition dumps, and had moved guns into them, for a wild but heavy strafe of shells of every imaginable calibre continued all night.

On September 3rd we moved again to another piece of "Wotan Line" trench, well to the right of Dury. All ranks found shelter in a very large, deep dugout for the night. At four o'clock the next morning we moved forward again to a position behind the village of Sodomont. This place had been an enemy heavy gun emplacement, with several dugouts in a high bank. These were merely shafts, filled with tiers of bunks, by no means roomy or comfortable.

Fritz seemed to have the air superiority during this battle, and brought down a large number of our planes and balloons. Big battles were now raging on all parts of the front, a heavy drain on our Air Force, for whose usual vigilance we had every reason to be thankful. If the enemy had not

To the Canal Du Nord

been so blind in this open warfare our casualties would undoubtedly have been many times greater.

On the night of September 6th the guns were moved up in front of Sodomont. Big, roomy cellars under a brewery, which Fritz had fitted out with bunks, made quarters for everyone. One section was placed to a flank beside a row of stunted willow trees, the crews living in "bivvies," which were splinter-proof, but no more.

Sodomont was the kind of a town a man would find himself in during a particularly bad nightmare. From a distance it looked a rather pretty little village, but on its streets, covered with splinters of brick and tile and glass, with its deserted and half-destroyed houses, it was decidedly "no bon." Unburied dead and bloated horses filled the air with an indescribable stench; flies abounded in their millions, in the cellars and everywhere else. An enemy balloon, which seemed to be only a couple of kilometres away, looked squarely down "Bismarck Strausse." Shells came both by day and night, when horses and limbers could be heard cantering down the road in their haste to vacate "O. U. Sodomont."

Still there were compensations. The village ahead, Ecourt St. Quentin, had but lately lost its civilian inhabitants. Rather than see the comforts of our civilization be destroyed by shell fire, we salvaged dishes, table cloths, blankets and, most important of all, a fine piano. This addition to our stores made passable a monotonous and flea-bitten existence, which had hitherto been forced to depend

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on rum issues for solace. Fritz had left his quarters a legacy of lice and fleas, who had no national prejudices, and took to us as readily as to the greasiest of Hienies.

Vegetables from the deserted gardens and some mushrooms from our courtyard helped to vary the army rations a little.

Our O-Pip was in a little "bivvie" on a slope facing the enemy, who held all the high ground across the Canal du Nord, Oisy-le-Verger, a big town on a hill, was one of our targets, showing day by day the effects of shelling.

Our drivers were having an equally busy time, moving almost daily from one side to another of the heavily shelled Arras-Cambrai road. The corner between this and the Dury road was a specially warm spot. Waggon-lines were finally picked near Cherissy, which we held until we moved out on rest.

On September 13th we were relieved by an Imperial battery. We were heartily sick of the place, and very glad to leave it. The long strain was beginning to tell on us. Fritz vented his final bit of speen in a strafe of one hundred and fifty rounds of H. E. on the afternoon of our relief, but no one was hurt. The guns were pulled out, and after a sleepy all-night march we reached Agny, a little ruined village near Arras, where the Brigade was billeted for a short rest.

CHAPTER XII.

Out Again—In Again.

THE fact that Agny was ruined afforded us a measure of protection, for the Gothas were always busy, and ruins were beneath their notice. We found what quarters we could in cellars and under tarpaulins. Arras, Aubigny, and the neighboring undevastated country were all within distance of a one-day pass, overflowing with eggs and chips, salads and champagne. The absence of Canadians had allowed the food stocks to accumulate a little.

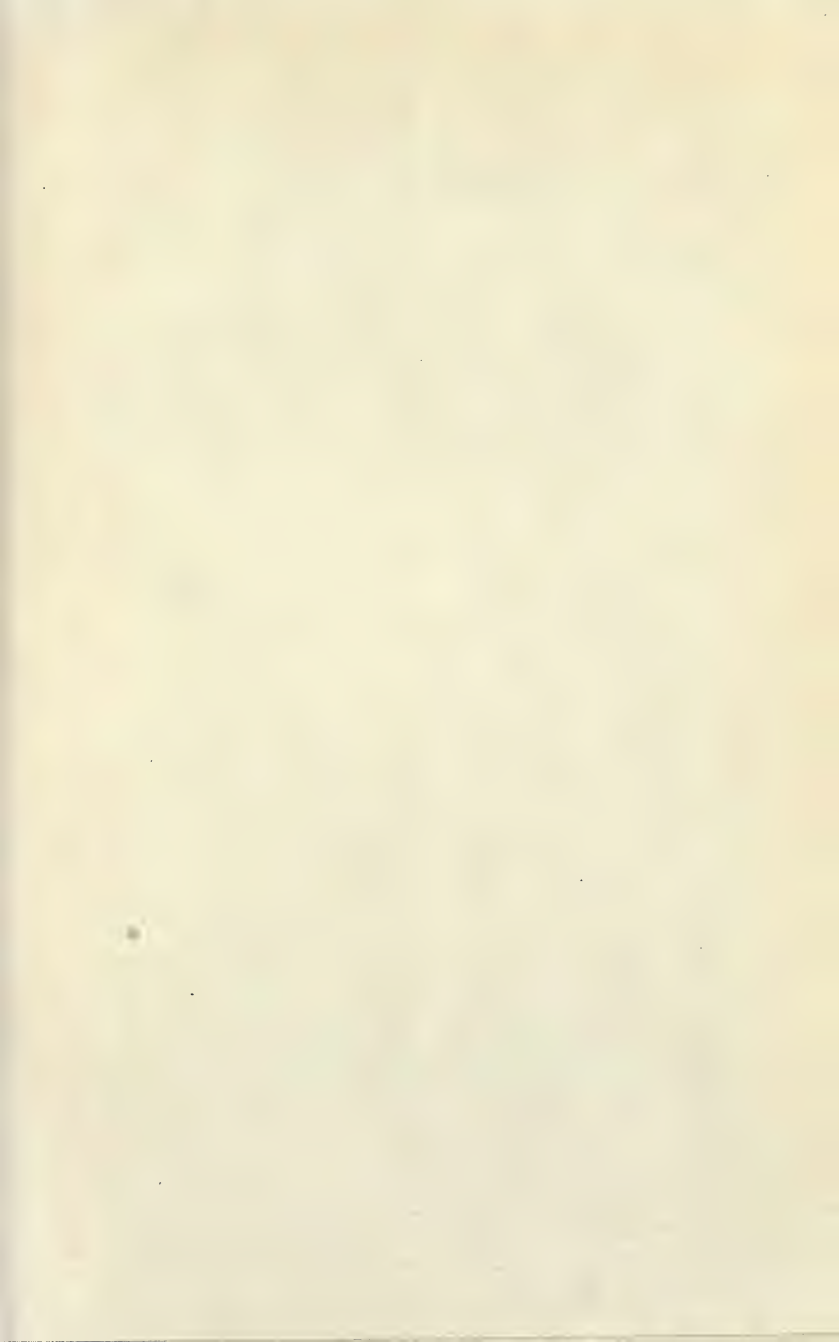
The Battery—men, horses and guns—were ready for a rest. They had seen almost continuous action since the momentous 8th of August, some of the most strenuous actions of the whole war. Major Dawes had been in England on a gunnery course, and Captain Hill, as O. C., had received unfaltering support from all ranks. The Captain now suggested a battery banquet to celebrate our successes, and as a little relaxation from the fighting. The battery was unanimous in accepting the proposal, all being anxious to help. A committee was formed to arrange matters, and a tax was levied to cover expenses—five francs from men and ten francs from N. C. O.'s. The officers also contributed generously.

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The committee began operations without delay. All the Arras district was scoured for pigs and fowls, fruit, vegetables and the necessary supply of vintage. The sub-committee on entertainment sought high and low for talent, and gathered in a motley crew of fiddlers, drummers, pianists, singers and elocutionists that would have done honour to Shea's. Voluntary workers quickly threw up a capacious banqueting hall with two by four's and tarpaulins. Tables and benches were hammered together, a platform was put up, a bar installed and the salvaged piano, which we had brought out of action with us, was brought in in state.

At last every detail was ready—food, drink and entertainment for the tired troops. Sergeants and Corporals, each with a towel draped gracefully over his arm, stood ready for action, under the head-waiter, Sergeant-Major Stone. Six o'clock. The bar-tenders uncorked the S. R. D., and as each man entered, armed to the teeth with mess-tin and eating utensils, he was administered a rum cocktail by way of an appetiser. The banquet was on.

And the cooks had done their work well. Beads of sweat came out on the waiters' foreheads as they ladled out the spuds and gravy, the salad, the roast meat, with tons of bread and butter and gallons of coffee. When finally everyone was so full that not even a driver could kick at the rations, the wine began to flow and the program commenced. Few performers have ever had an audience so appreciative. Colonel Hanson, Captain Hill and Major





THAT BEAUTIFUL BILLET, BOYEFFLES.



BATTERY POSITION, LIEVIN.

Out Again—In Again

Dawes (who had just returned) made short speeches, amid wild applause. A Highlander named Murphy did nobly as a comedian; our own quartette roared out the "Battery Rag." Everything ran smoothly under the hand of Master of Ceremonies Padget.

But alas, for the strength of the brew! The performing talent succumbed to its influence, and fell fighting for places on the platform. The audience waxed more and more hilarious—and now, gentle reader, our memory begins to fail us. We can only see a pandemonium of figures in a sort of pink moonlight, jumping, singing, embracing, doing everything in fact, while through it all, like the drone of the pipes, runs the mournful tune of the "Battery Rag." Teetotalers spent a busy night covering wells and putting the weary to rest.

Two days later we moved forward, but not into action, stopping first at Cherissy and later near Hendecourt. We soon began hauling ammunition to a new gun position in a piece of "Wotan Line" trench, behind the Canal du Nord at Inchy. The gunners went up to prepare gun platforms. An enormous amount of traffic had accumulated behind the line; we knew the signs of a "show" by now, and appearances were promising. On the night of September 26th, through roads packed with every kind of traffic, we moved four guns into action. Two had been taken up the night before.

Elaborate barrage maps for the new push were ready. First came the formidable Canal du Nord,

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next Bourlon Woods, the scene of heroic fighting by the Guards in the 1917 disaster, and beyond Bourlon lay Cambrai, for which so many thousands had already died in vain.

CHAPTER XIII.

Cambrai.

THE Allies were now hammering at the "Hindenburg Line." Our break through the "Wotan Line," heralded by the papers as the most momentous event of the war, had led the way for a general advance on Fritz's defence system. Good news came in daily from Palestine, from the Balkans, from the French and the American Sectors. Optimists were betting that the fighting would be over by Christmas, 1918.

Our barrage on the Canal du Nord opened at five-twenty a.m. on September 27th. Bourlon Woods had been soaked with gas by our heavies, and was not included in the barrage—the idea being to leave it alone until surrounded. We had a liaison party with the advancing infantry—Lieut. Basil Lepper and Signallers Clemens and McAdam.

Several of the batteries near us suffered casualties at the kick-off, but our own crews were untouched. After breakfast our guns were out of range, so we moved to the left of Inchy. Here word was received by 'phone that Lieut. Lepper and Clemens had been killed in the advance. This was sad news, for both were fine fellows and very popular in the Battery. Their graves are not far from Bourlon.

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The infantry continued to forge ahead, and in the afternoon we crossed the canal and took up a temporary position. Our engineers had done remarkably fast work in bridging the canal at different points for artillery and other traffic.

It was past midnight when we moved ahead, reaching a position to the left of Bourlon Village, just in time to help in a barrage for the Third Division, who were in front of Cambrai. We were now to follow open warfare tactics, following one battalion in close support and firing on such targets as hindered its progress. On the afternoon of the 28th we moved our guns to some underbrush in front of Bourlon Woods. Cambrai was in plain view from a crest just ahead of our position.

The same evening at seven o'clock we took part in another barrage behind which our infantry attempted to advance. The enemy's resistance in artillery and machine gun fire was very stubborn. Just after our barrage ended a great number of Gothas came over, bombing the battery locations, which the gun flashes had revealed. This lasted all night, while we slept in shell holes or such other cover as was available. The waggon-lines were in Bourlon Village behind us. This night's bombing was the forerunner of long series of night raids on guns and horse lines, which made sleep a luxury and greatly increased the strain on everyone. If we were to take Cambrai, it was clear that the enemy intended to exact payment to the limit.

On the 29th, in full view of the towers of Cambrai, our guns went forward to a position behind

Cambrai

Raillencourt, to the right of the Arras-Cambrai road. There were some bits of trench near the guns, in which we made our "bivvies." A big dressing station was in a sunken road behind us, and a stream of prisoners, carrying in our wounded, passed by us. A short distance behind the sunken road was a shallow valley. Against the bank of this we had our cook-house and officers' quarters.

We did a good deal of firing here at targets supplied by the infantry, clearing out a machine gun nest in Saint Olle, a suburb of Cambrai. The city was now practically surrounded on the right and left, though the enemy still occupied it, filling its towers with machine guns and retiring only after stiff fighting. Our casualties were terrible; the dead lay thicker than we had ever seen before, and the battalions ahead were worn out and cut to pieces.

Our next move was to a yard beside the Arras-Cambrai Road, near St. Olle. The guns were concealed in some old Hienie stables. The men lived where best they could, the lucky ones in a capacious tomb, which was serving for an office.

After a busy day firing for the Princess Pats (who were fighting for Tilloy) and sniping at the Cambrai Towers, we moved out at two in the morning, taking up our former position, near Raillencourt. An O-Pip had been established beside Infantry Headquarters, in a sunken road, in order to maintain close co-operation. This sunken road was full of dugouts, stored with "Blue Cross" gas shells, which were cleared out to make sleeping

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quarters. This O-Pip line and another into Cambrai, where we were doing liason work, kept the linemen busy day and night.

Along with the other units in the Brigade we had two forward guns in front of Saint Olle.

The waggon-lines, back at Bournon, were getting their share, the night bombing showing no signs of a let-up. One bomb killed and wounded over a third of our horses and mules, a serious handicap to a field battery until reinforcements should arrive.

Finally we moved to a new position, on the left of the Arras-Cambrai Road, behind Haynecourt. There were plenty of small "bivvies" here, and we had comparatively good quarters and a quiet time. Men and horses were tired out, and this quiet spell came just when it was most needed.

Cambrai was now in a pincers, and the enemy resistance was growing weaker. On October 8th the city fell, and the advance, held up for so long, continued.

CHAPTER XIV.

Valenciennes.

FOLLOWING the fall of Cambrai, the whole line advanced for several kilometres. We moved ahead to a sugar factory behind the vilage of Bantigny, skirting several places which he was shelling hotly with percussion shrapnel. Accommodation for everyone was found in a dry brick sewer beside the factory. The 53rd Battery and some heavy artillerymen also had a section of it. Fritz continued to shell all night at regular one-hour intervals, but we had no casualties until morning, when we began to move ahead. He was pounding roads and villages with percussion when we pulled out past Blecourt and Cuvillers. This brought us into open fields, on high ground. Across a wide valley we could see the flash of Fritz's whizz-bang guns, so we imagined his gunners were using open sights, and quite joyful at such a fine target to try their skill on. We manouvered here and there at a trot, through air full of sneezing gas, with his shells following continually. A position was finally picked near Cuvillers.

The next move was to Esuars, by the Canal d'Escaud, two days later. From here the guns went ahead to some old Hienie splinter proofs, to the left

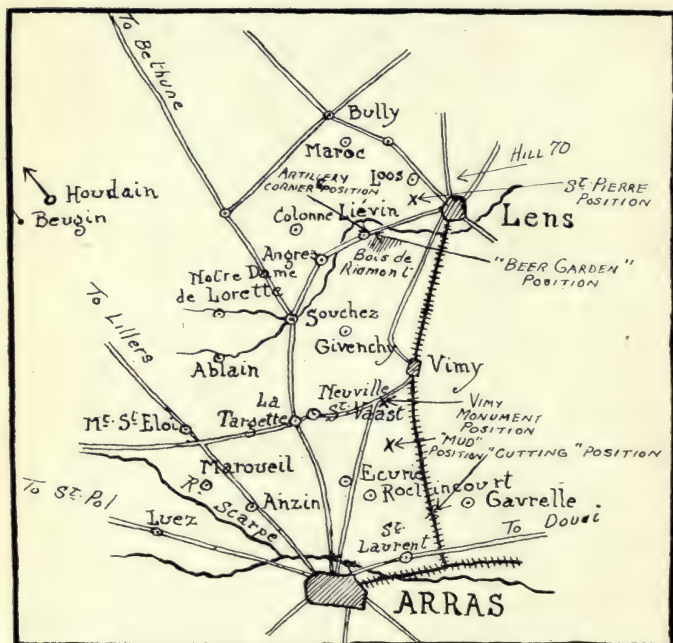
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of Thun-Levecque. The enemy was on the high ground beyond the canal, but the fighting had calmed down to comparative quiet. We had two forward guns near the village of Estrun, which did our sniping and night firing. They were bothered at night from the machine-guns across the canal. Our O-Pip was in a pair of tall poplar trees on the crest ahead of the guns, but there was little enemy movement to be seen.

After several days here all the guns were moved to Estrun. The waggon-lines were at Eswars, the drivers living quite comfortably in the recently evacuated houses. Both there and at the guns the rations were improved by cabbage, turnips, onions, potatoes and squash from the "neighbors' gardens."

From Estrun we made a long night move to the village of Marquette. We stayed here until morning without putting the guns into action. Before we had time for breakfast we were on the road again, in wet, dismal weather. Before long an unfamiliar sight struck us—French civilians walking down the roads. At noon we had dinner in a fair-sized mining town, full of civilians, who were eager to give us all hot coffee, though we knew they had very little. Some lucky individuals were "in" on some private celebrations, in which long-buried bottles of wine played a leading part. The people looked thin and underfed, but overjoyed at their deliverance.

That afternoon we moved into the city of Denain, a big manufacturing town, and put our guns



Valenciennes

in action in a vacant field beside the main street. Fritz was just beyond the town, and it was a curious sight to see civilians everywhere, apparently quite unconcerned in their great joy, while machine-guns rattled and the guns still barked. French children played beside the guns, and gallant Canadian infantrymen promenaded up and down the streets with mademoiselles who had seen only German soldiery for four long years.

One unforgettable incident in Denain was the march of about fifty freshly taken prisoners down the street, preceded by all the garçons of the town waving tricolors and singing the "Marseillaise" as they had never sung it before. Many probably never had, but they put enough spirit into this one time to make up for the years when it was forbidden.

After supper a light barrage was put over. We stayed at Denain overnight, in better quarters than we had seen in many a day. The next afternoon we moved on into the town of Herin, some six kilometres ahead, leaving Denain through streets lined with its cheering inhabitants. Our guns went into action beside the Herin Railway Station. Our quarters were still luxurious compared with the weeks of "bivvies" and shell holes, for the houses were almost untouched and well provided with beds and furniture. The waggon-lines were beside the guns, the horses between a high wall and a row of houses, until finally it became so hot that they were forced to move back to a small village nearer Denain.

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Two guns had been moved forward, near a small fosse, to the right of the Valenciennes road. "C" sub gun was taken ahead for a day in order to do open-sight firing on machine-gun nests in a street only a few yards from our front line. Every suspected house was registered systematically, while our crew was only molested by one burst of machine-gun fire.

The whole battery was now at the fosse position. A section was moved forward into La Sentinelle, a suburb of Valenciennes. The O-Pip was ahead of this, and a good bit of sniping was done from here. The roads were heavily shelled at night, and the linesmen had their hands full with the line back to the Battery, which ran by the main road. Observing from this O-Pip, we were able to do some fast work in breaking up an enemy counter-attack on the 51st Highland Division, on our right.

The Battery position was not strafed until the morning of the barrage, supporting our attack on Valenciennes, November 1st, when we suffered several casualties to gun crews and drivers who were hauling ammunition. This attack was successful, and another large and important city of Northern France was in our hands.

CHAPTER XV.

Our Fighting Days Are Ended.

AFTER the battle of Valenciennes enemy planes used to circle over us every afternoon and drop propaganda, little leaflets, announcing that "Peace was in sight," and demanding "Why are we still fighting?" We felt inclined to agree with Fritz in these hopes and sentiments, but considered that it was up to him to knuckle under officially to Marshal Foch before we could close the breeches for the last time. Austria, Turkey and Bulgaria had surrendered; Germany was talking of an armistice, and it was a pessimist of the deepest dye who did not expect the end to come almost any day. Equally incurable optimists prophesied that we should eat our Christmas dinners in Canada. But this was far wide of the mark, and we still had a good bit of scrapping ahead.

From the fosse we moved to La Sentinelle, holding a position there for the night. The next day we were in Valenciennes, with guns in action in a large vacant field, or park, and all the horses in a big barn not far behind. After dark the guns went ahead to the suburb of Saint Saulve, the horses still staying at Valenciennes.

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The city had been damaged considerably by shell fire, and the great majority of the citizens had been evacuated by Fritz. There was a fine municipal bath there, which we made good use of, for we badly needed it.

Our infantry was advancing along the Mons road towards the Belgian border, following over the same ground as the British in their famous 1914 retreat. Our guns, following closely, moved up behind Onnain. The waggon-lines left Valenciennes and came up the Mons road to just behind the gun positions, G. S. Waggon, Cook-Cart, Field-Kitchen and all, with a Hienie balloon apparently only a few kilometres away. Fritz did some scattered shelling, and in the afternoon we moved the horse lines to a small village a couple of kilometres to the left of the Mons road. The civilians were still there, and celebrated their return to France by a nightly dance in the one estaminet, to the hammering and banging of a music box.

The terrible effect of our harassing fire was shown by the great number of dead enemy horses and broken waggon and limbers lying by the roads. There was one big gun, near Onnaing, turned on its side with teams, drivers and crew lying dead around it.

Rainy weather had set in, and the roads were so bad that the Feld Guns had to furnish almost all the artillery support. We had suffered heavily with sick and wounded. Many more were away on leave. Continual moving and night calls for ammunition,



MADAGASCAR CORNER.



LOOKING DOWN TRENCH IN REAR OF GUNS—LIEVIN.

Our Fighting Days Are Ended

through muddy roads, had made horses and drivers almost dead beat. The probability that Fritz was much worse off than we were, and would soon cave in, was our chief consolation.

The guns were moved ahead, following the infantry to a cross-road behind Quaruble. Word was received that the 13th Brigade was to pull out of Valenciennes for a short rest, and the waggon-lines were moved back and billets taken in a row of houses. The guns, however, made one more advance to a fosse yard near Quaruble, where they were fired for the last time in the Great War. In pouring rain they were taken back to Valenciennes. We had well furnished houses to live in, and prospects seemed good for a much-needed rest.

But to our surprise, just as we were becoming settled, orders came in to move ahead to take part in a new barrage. Everything was packed up without delay, and we treked up the Mons road to Crespin, a partly ruined town on the Belgian border. Here it was found that our support was not needed after all, as the infantry were still advancing, with very little resistance from the enemy.

Two days later, on November 11th, Signaller "Louse" Lein wrote down the greatest message that an army telephone ever transmitted. Germany had signed an armistice that was virtually a complete surrender, hostilities were to cease at eleven a.m. November 11th, 1918. While not unexpected, the news seemed unbelievably good. There were no facilities here at the "front" for such celebra-

The 55th C.F.A.

tions as Canadian cities gave way to, but every man felt deeply thankful that it was all over and so many of his friends and comrades left to go home again.

CHAPTER XVI.

The March to the Rhine.

MOST of us were so joyful to feel that Peace had actually come that we did not look far into the future. But any who did, and saw a speedy return to Canada ahead, were soon disillusioned. Within a few days we received news that the 13th Brigade would march to the Rhine, attached to the Second Canadian Division, in the vanguard of the Army of Occupation. While we undoubtedly preferred going home to anything else, still, if honor were to be thrust upon us, we were willing to accept it in good spirit. The march and our stay on the Rhine promised many interesting scenes and anecdotes, which we could do justice later on in the capacity of grandfathers.

After a few days at Crespin, we moved into Belgium, through the famous city of Mons, to the village of Havre. Mons is a pretty, modern little town, with a touch of antiquity about its clean and cobbled streets, draped, as they were then, with the Red, Yellow and Black banner of Belgium. In Havre we were billeted among the civilians, who treated us kindly and well.

The march began for us on November 19th.

The 55th C.F.A.

Our week at Havre had been spent in getting horses, harness and vehicles in such shape as would make Fritz think that we had been having an easy job chasing him. The plan of march was to cover from twenty to thirty kilometres in a day, followed by several days of rest. Handling the tremendous traffic on the main roads required skillful manipulation.

Liberated Belgium was "en fete" to greet her victorious deliverers. Every town and village was decked out in evergreen and bunting, with placards in English and French lauding the heroes to the skies. Allied flags hung from every window, many of them home-made for the occasion. Some of the attempts at the Union Jack and Old Glory would have been amusing had we not appreciated the spirit that made them. Every town greeted us with a turnout of cheering citizens, who were only too pleased to have us billeted with them. Big, soft beds, bigger and softer than we had flopped in since many a flea-bitten day, were placed at our disposal. In spite of their scanty stocks, families insisted that we eat with them, and it took a strong will to refuse. Mademoiselles besieged the gallant victors for souvenirs, and the Canadians left a trail of "Canada's" and Maple Leaves behind them. Every husky young Belgian swore that he was emigrating to Canada in the Spring; blushing demoiselles avowed that to "marier Canadien" was the height of their ambition.

And so we progressed on our triumphal march, crowned with laurels of goodwill and swamped in-



HORSE LINES, BOYEFFLES.



BATTERY POSITION, CITE ST. PIERRE.

The March to the Rhine

wardly with strong black coffee. First through the Province of Hainault, thickly populated and rich in coal and manufactures, into the Province of Namur; down the Valley of the Meuse into the Province of Liege, and the hills and woods of Ardennes. From the border to the Rhine was a hard hike, over steep hill after steep hill, in rainy weather, among population that was indifferent, if not hostile.

Finally the Rhine Valley came into view, with the broad river winding away to the north and south, by castled hills, famous in many an old German story. On December 13th we crossed the Rhine, with General Currie taking the salute, the first Allied field guns in that sector to rumble across a Rhine bridge.

Still "Front Line" Artillery, we continued our march to the little city of Siegburg, six kilometres across the river from Bonn. Here we found excellent quarters in the building of a big munition works, with room for men and horses of the whole Brigade. Millions of "dud" shells lay on every side, which, thank God, we had done out of the privilege of making us duck.

The munition works had electric lights, steam heat and hot shower baths. Thousands of employees, many of them soldiers who had "demobilized" themselves, loafed around and needed very little urging to knock together mangers for the horses and bunks for the men. Many, however, had billets with the German civilians and preferred to keep them.

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Following are the stopping points of the march :

Havre.

Vaux Chavonne.

Chappelle-les-Herlin-
mont.

Beche.

Hinderhausen.

Ransart.

Nimursohod.

Jemeppes-sur-Sambre.

Stadtkyle.

Flawlino.

Odendorf.

Thou Samson.

Buchhausen.

Hawelange.

Bonn and Siegburg.

Petite-Ham.

CHAPTER VXII.

Germany and After.

SIEGBURG is a modern town, full of substantial buildings of stone and brick, gathered around a high, abrupt hill, called the Michaelenberg. Its streets were clean, and the stores were large and well stocked with everything except food. The people seemed to be well clothed, many of the men still wearing odds and ends of their military uniforms, perhaps a complete outfit of field grey with a civilian hat to show their peaceful intentions.

Bonn, across the river, is a famous educational centre, the home of Bonn University, one of the greatest in Europe. Beethoven's house, a mecca of music lovers, is also there, as well as several interesting provincial museums. It is a pretty, clean and well-built city, preferable in many ways to Cologne, where the British Headquarters were situated. We could get one-day passes to Cologne, time enough only for a short look at the biggest of Rhineish cities, with its beautiful Cathedral towering over the river. A few were able to take the railway trip down the river to Coblenz and Mains, the American and French headquarters. The tracks run by the riverside, but while it would be a

The 55th C.F.A.

wonderful trip in summer, by castles and crags, and vine-clad hills, December and January were not very favorable months to tourists.

Those who were billeted with the Germans found their home life much like our own. Lack of consideration for their women folks was the biggest difference, and in the street cars more than one indignant Herr was forced to give his seat to a Fraulein by a wrathful Canadian soldier. We tried to treat the people with courtesy, and, to do them justice, they showed us many kindnesses in our relations with them. Whether such kindness sprang from the spirit of Christmas, from "propaganda," or from ordinary human good nature is a matter for individual conjecture. The civilians of Siegburg were always quiet and well behaved during our stay with them as troops of occupation.

Our mornings were spent in stables, in exercise rides or battery marches. The afternoons were free. Classes were begun in various subjects, commercial law, agriculture, sign-painting and others. We had one inspection at Siegburg by the General commanding the Second Division, to which we were still attached.

On January 27th the Battery entrained at Wahn, and after an all-night trip in the usual box cars reached Namur. From here a trek of thirty kilometres was made to the villages of Bomal and Mont St. Andre, midway between Namur and Louvain. A billeting party had secured beds for everyone with the inhabitants of the two villages, and stable room for all the horses. Guns and limbers

Germany and After

were parked, and the Battery settled down until its turn should come to leave for England.

Bomal and Mont. St. Andre are straggling farm villages, but the comfortable billets and the kind treatment we received there made up for an unhandiness due to lack of concentration. The farming communities of Belgium did not feel the pinch for food like the towns and cities, and the boys were almost forced to accept of these people's hospitality in sharing their meals.

Horses, limbers and equipment left us gradually, the later to Ordance at Andenne, the first sold to the Belgium Government. And so our long-faced partners, veterans, like ourselves, will lead a peaceful and honest existence working in the fields which they have helped to free.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Homeward Bound

THREE long months we were kept in Belgium, and with the quiet life and that yearning for home it seemed all the longer.

The order for moving to England seemed to be never coming, and naturally the grouching waxed high as the weeks passed. When the weather was fair we spent most of our time playing baseball, developing a lot of excellent material for the city league and semi-pro teams at home.

Demobilization was now in full swing, moving as fast as the troops could be taken home from England. Our moving orders came on May 1st, and we entrained at Ramielles station the afternoon of the 4th. The train was made up of the usual "side door Pullmans," with cushions of straw, but as this was the first lap on our homeward journey we were satisfied with anything. We arrived at the port of Le Havre the following night, and were quartered at the Canadian Embarkation Camp for six days before embarking for England. While here we were put through the disinfecter where any of those affectionate little creatures that had been our constant companions through the long, weary months of the war, and who still hated to part company

Homeward Bound

with us, were got rid of for good and all. The camp was about five miles away from the centre of the city, but every night the majority of the boys treked this distance to get a last taste of the sparkling vintages for which the Frenchman is famous.

On the 10th we left Le Havre and crossed the channel to England, arriving at Southampton on the morning of the 11th. The trip across was uneventful. Entraining here we were taken to Witley Camp. The first five days here were spent in getting all our papers ready for demobilization, and the sixth day we were all sent on leave to bid goodbye to the many friends we had made during our stay on that side of the ocean. In a few days time one could see the purple patch in any corner of the British Isles one wandered to, and apparently everyone enjoyed this last leave.

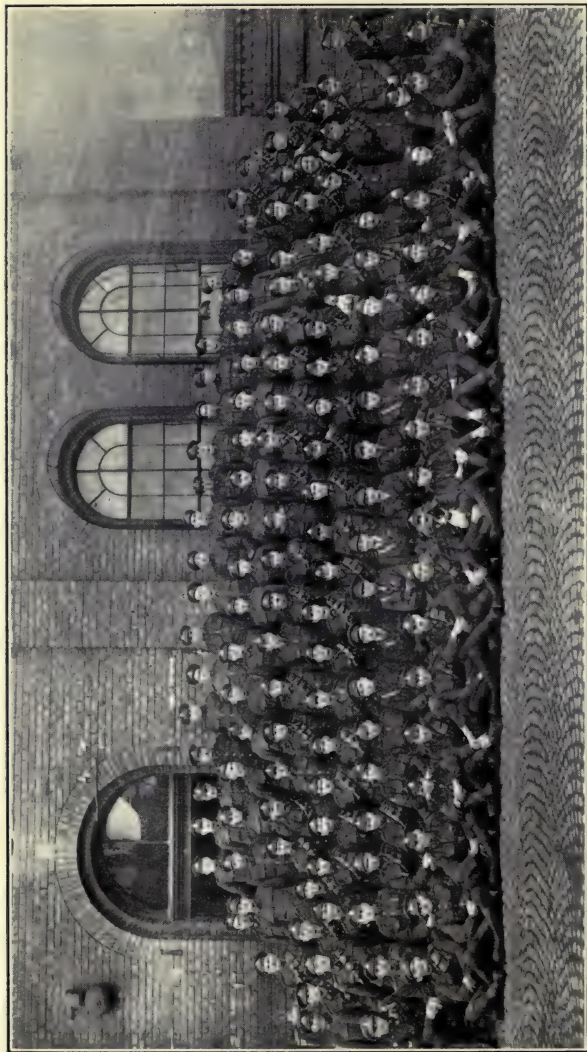
During the early morning hours of June 11th the division entrained at Witley station en route to Liverpool, arriving there at two in the afternoon. We immediately went on board ship—an experience that had looked a long way off not many months past. Our boat was the S. S. Scotian, a C. P. R. liner. Soon after getting settled we learned that the stewards of the ship were on strike, and that we were likely to be held up in port for five or six days. However, next day a settlement was arranged, and all things were made ready for the voyage. We pulled anchor at ten o'clock on the morning of the 13th. We had a pleasant trip across, especially up the St. Lawrence to Montreal, arriving there at

The 55th C.F.A.

eight o'clock the night of the 22nd. The western units were taken off first and their trains despatched, the Ontario units following. It was good to get on the Canadian trains again. Leaving Montreal that night at eleven, we arrived at Exhibition Camp, Toronto, Monday morning.

One hour after detraining we were civilians and happy once more. Before many days now we would be scattered to our homes from East to West of our wide Dominion, taking up the plans that had been dropped when the war thrust itself upon us. But there will be a pleasure in recalling those scenes in France and Belgium—not for themselves, but for the many friendships which they have helped to cement.

THE END



55th BATTERY C. F. A.

(PHOTO TAKEN IN SIEGBURG GERMANY, JANUARY, 1919)

Battery Roll

BATTERY ROLL

Abbott, C. W.	R. R. No. 4, Victoria, B. C.
Abbott, L.	R. R. No. 4, Victoria, B. C.
Abell, A. E.	1 North St., St. Catharines, Ont.
Allan, W. H.	3 Metcalfe St., Toronto.
Allen, C. O.	Winnipeg, Man.
Ames, G. G.	Toronto, Ont.
Amos, L.	R. R. No. 5, Guelph, Ont.
Anderson, J. F.	Knox College, Toronto.
Andrews, H.	369 Shaw St., Toronto.
* Andrews, J. W.	52 Dixon St., Toronto.
Ashforth, A.	43 Olive Ave., Toronto.
Alexander, H. E.	Halifax, N. S.
Arnold, R. A.	Galt, Ont.
Baker, H.	R. R. No. 3, Embro, Ont.
Ballard, S. D. (M.M.)	3 Beresford Apts., Toronto.
Baxter, H. A.	378 Manning Ave., Toronto.
Beattie, C. H.	London, Ont.
Bechill, C.	Glencoe, Ont.
* Bennett, O. W.	191 Perry St., Peterboro, Ont.
Bennett, A. Ashley	Sydney, N. S.
* Blissenden, A. G.	514 Manning Ave., Toronto.
Bowman, L. M.	Elmira, Ont.
Brandon, W. H.	Bayfield, Ont.
Brown, R. W. (M.M.)	Summerland, B. C.
Brown, T.	71 Holmesdale Rd., Toronto.
Brown, W. D. (M.S.M.)	71 Holmesdale Rd., Toronto.

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Braddon, G. R.	Dutton, Ont.
Burrows, A. R.	81 Farquhar St., Guelph, Ont.
Burns, J. M.	Hamilton, Ont.
Cairney, T.	67 Woolwich, Guelph, Ont.
Cameron, P. C.	315 Dundurn St., Hamilton, Ont.
Carr, J. P.	328 Simcoe St., Oshawa, Ont.
Carson, H. A.	Oakville, Ont.
Casson, H. M.	113 Rebecca St., Stratford, Ont.
Castle, F. G.	Oakville, Ont.
Cavers, V. E.	291 Ontario St., Toronto.
*Challenger, F. N.	206 Dunn Ave., Toronto.
Chick, R. T.	179 Bruce Ave., Windsor, Ont.
Church, W.	138 Peterboro Ave., Toronto, Ont.
*Clews, T.	183 Pleasant St., Halifax, N. S.
Cody, J. L.	Oakwood, Ont.
Connon, P. C.	O. A. C., Guelph, Ont.
Cornish, P. C.	434 Dundas St. E., Toronto.
*Cook, G.	47 Vine St., St. Catharines, Ont.
Cooper, H. B. S.	Alderwigh, Eng.
Cooper, A. C.	526 Waterloo St., London, Ont.
Cotsworth, F. B.	231 7th St. N., Westminster, B. C.
Crawford, R. S.	O. A. C., Guelph, Ont.
*Cuthbertson, J. C.	Perth, Ont.
Dalglish, J. T.	48 Manchester Ave., Toronto.
Davis, G.	101 Maitland St., Toronto.
Davis, A. H.	183 Beatrice St., New Swindon, Wilts, Eng.
Denholm, J. M.	967 Lansdowne Ave., Toronto, Ont.
Donald, F. C.	Wyoming, Ont.
Downes, W.	2440 Dundas St., Toronto.
Duncan, C. C.	Vineland, Ont.

Battery Roll

Duncan, G.	Elora, Ont.
Ditchburn, J.	Arcola, Sask.
Durning, R.	Economy Point, N. S.
Eckersley, W. L.	Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ont.
*Edwards, G. H.	Onondago, Ont.
Edwards, H. S.	Onondago, Ont.
Endall, G. W.	Courtney, B. C.
Farmer, A. E.	Beamsville, Ont.
Firstbrooke, A. R.	223 Grenadier Rd., Toronto, Ont.
*Forestell, T. F. (M.M.)	Campbellford, Ont.
Fitzgerald, J.	St. Catharines, Ont.
Forsythe, L. S.	4 Hooper Ave., Centre Island, Toronto.
Forsythe, W. B.	4 Hooper Ave., Centre Island, Toronto.
Fowles, A. E.	103 Miller Ave., Toronto.
Fraser, D.	Echo Bay, Ont.
*Fraser, R. L.	Pembroke, Ont.
Fraser, R.	524 Argyle Ave., Westmount, Montreal.
*Fraser, T. A.	10 Criscoe St., Toronto.
French, H. S.	Broadview, Vernon, B. C.
Fulton, A.	Beamsville, Ont.
Freechete, G.	Montreal, Que.
*Gardhouse, W. W.	Weston, Ont.
Gill, W.	Viceroy, Sask.
Gordon, G. A.	Arkell, Ont.
Gordon, J.	
Gould, R. C.	Uxbridge, Ont.
Graham, J. L.	195 Dunn Ave., Toronto.
Gregg, A. H.	Oakville, Ont.
Greig, G. T.	Collingwood, Ont.
Grant, J.	418 McMillen Ave, Winnipeg, Man.

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Green, W. E.	12 Thornton, Ave., London, Ont.
Grierson, W. E.	St. George, N. B.
Grobecker, S. W.	San Deigo, Cal., U.S.A.
Harris, A. T.	53 Sibley Ave. E., Toronto.
Hadden, J. J.	18 Wilson St., Guelph, Ont.
Hall, J. R.	98 Major St., Toronto.
Hammersley, A. S.	67 Forbes Ave., Guelph, Ont.
Harris, J. T. McK.	Upper Canard, N. S.
Hammond, W. A.	Port Dover, Ont.
Harrity, J. J. (M.M.)	9 May Ave., Windsor, Ont.
Hawkins, H.	375 Kearg St., Sapperton, New Westminster, B.C.
Hamilton, H. M.	65 Spark St., Ottawa.
Harney, W.	La Passe, Ont.
Henderson, F. J.	104 Dunsmore Ave., Hamilton.
Henderson, S.	Napanee, Ont.
Heron, I. B.	488 Manning Ave., Toronto.
Hicks, F. L.	155 Gerrard St., Toronto.
Hipple, W. C.	354 S. Vidal St., Sarnia, Ont.
*Hobbs, N. B.	45 Northcote Ave., Toronto.
Hollands, F. T.	Sarnia, Ont.
Holmes, D. G.	100 Windsor St., Halifax, N.S.
Hillan, J. L.	Shaw St., Toronto.
Horning, O. M.	Waterdown, Ont.
Howe, I. H.	Listowel, Ont.
Hubbard, C. W.	64 Keith St., Hamilton, Ont.
Holman, H.	
Hughes, T. H.	Bradwell, Sask.
Hunter, W. G.	Petawawa, Ont.
Hussey, O. I.	Moorefield, Ont.
*Howard, G. R.	Detroit, Mich, U.S.A.

Battery Roll

Harper, P. L.	.....	Anagance, N. B.
Ingham, C.	.....	25 Kirk St., Kitchener, Ont.
Ironsides, G. A.	.....	Ilderton, Ont.
Illingsworth, F.	.....	Guelph, Ont.
James, C. E.	.....	156 Larkhall Lane, London, Eng.
Jeffery, J. A.	.....	11 Waterloo Ave., Guelph, Ont.
*Jeffery, A. G.	.....	11 Waterloo Ave., Guelph, Ont.
Johnson, A. E.	.....	80 Dupont St., Toronto.
Johnson, B. D.	.....	80 Dupont St., Toronto.
Johnson, J. T.	.....	Noven, Ont.
Johnston, G. T.	.....	Grafton, Ont.
Johnston, W. J.	.....	Paisley, Ont.
*Jonah, H. N. (M.M.)	.....	Sussex, N. B.
Jones, H. L.	.....	Barrie, Ont.
Jones, W. F.	.....	80 Summerville Ave., Westmount, Montreal, Que.
Kay, W. J. B.	.....	R. R., Rockwood, Ont.
Keogh, P. (M.M.)	.....	14 Renelegh Rd., Dublin, Ireland.
Knox, R. G.	.....	R. R., Indian River, Ont.
Kerr, A.	.....	25 Prince Arthur St., St. Lambert, Montreal.
King, M. L.	.....	Boston, Mass., U.S.A.
Kydd, J. F.	.....	Ashley Jct., Sydney, C. B., N. S.
*Laird, D. G.	.....	Summerside, P. E. I.
Leavitt, D. O.	.....	Bloomfield, Ont.
Lasby, L. A.	.....	Kitchener, Ont.
Lees, W. W.	.....	55 Wellington St. S., Hamilton.
Lein, C. H.	.....	90 Langford Ave., Toronto.
Leriche, K. H.	.....	263 Crawford St., Toronto.
Lee, H. I.	Grafton, Ont.
Long, L. C.	Namao, Alta.
Longhurst, H. S. (M.M.)	324 Cumberland Ave., Hamilton.

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Lovatt, G. H.	33 Balsam Ave., Toronto.
Lowrie, J. C.	Inwood, Ont.
Lumb, R. N.	Kitchener, Ont.
Lunt, W. O.	198 Napier St., Hamilton.
*Manning, E. D.	Forest, Ont.
Marchant, P. H.	Toronto, Ont.
Marshall, J.	373 Barbard St., Toronto.
Matheson, A.	Embryo, Ont.
Maybee, H. J.	Trenton, Ont.
Martinson, T.	Hyde Park, Ont.
May, A.	501 Lonsdale Ave., Vancouver N., B. C.
Mercer, N. W.	Sarnia, Ont.
Miller, W. G.	Stratford, Ont.
*Miller, E. E.	
Moore, J.	24 Wascana Ave., Toronto.
Moore, J. A. C.	Islington, Ont.
Moore, W. F.	330 Cogswell Ave., Toronto.
*Morton, B. W.	Newmarket, Ont.
Mellish, G. R.	937 Hornby St., Vancouver, B.C.
Munro, F. C.	Atta Vista, B.C.
Murphy, F. C.	Montreal, Que.
Mead, T. M.	Thamesville, Ont.
Macadam, J. A.	Van Kleek Hill, Ont.
*McArthur, D. C.	Appin, Ont.
McDonald, A. M.	Campbellford, Ont.
McNeill, B. C.	28 Leopold St., Toronto, Ont.
McDonald, H. F.	Montreal, Que.
McCarthy, J.	28 Upper Queen St., Charlettetown, P. E. I.
*McComb, H. R.	274 Crawford St., Toronto.
McCristie, J. F.	Lowell, Mass., U. S. A.

Battery Roll

McEwan, W. E.	330 Princess Ave., Vancouver, B.C.
*McGee, J.	Lachine, Ont.
McIntyre, R.	Glace Bay, N. S.
McKenzie, E. J.	2365 Waverley St., Montreal.
McKenzie, J.	Taber, Alta.
McLellan, H. A.	16 Argyle St., St. Lambers, Montreal.
McKillap, R.	Marble Mountain, C. B., N. C.
McMillan, G. W.	Cartwright, Man.
McTague, C. P.	79 Durham St., Guelph, Ont.
McLeod, E. R. L.	50 Pierpont St., Brooklyn, N. Y., U. S. A.
*Nash, W. J.	139 Balsam Ave., Hamilton, Ont.
Navin, E.	Cobourg, Ont.
Neate, W. S.	1436 Garnet St., Regina, Sask.
Nelles, C.	64 Beach St., Toronto.
Nelles, O. F.	64 Beach St., Toronto.
Nelles, A.	Lacombe, Alta.
Oldfield, H. G.	Inglewood, Ont.
Orth, C. C.	Islington, Ont.
O'Hearn, M. P.	1853 Clark St., Montreal.
Pavelling, H.	89 Berkeley St., Toronto.
Padget, C. M.	Deseronto, Ont.
Parnham, H. C.	Drayton, Ont.
*Plant, C. E.	Drayton, Ont.
*Plant, D. R.	94 Wellington St., Kitchener, Ont.
Pollakowsky, V. A.	13 George St., Brantford, Ont.
*Postelethwaite, W. J.	Cornwall, Ont.
Pescod, H. A.	Thessalon, Ont.
Phillips, M. J.	173 Western Ave., Toronto, Ont.
*Powell, W. S.	Woodstock, Ont.
Pyatt, W. J.	

The 55th C.F.A.

Reeve, W. G.	Barrie, Ont.
Reeves, F. O.	Humber Bay, Ont.
Richards, N. L. W.	13 Olive Ave., Toronto.
Richardson, J. A.	170 Madison Ave., Toronto.
Richardson, R. L.	Guelph, Ont.
Richmond, A.	Perth, Ont.
Richmond, R. (M.M.)	Perth, Ont.
Rigney, A. W.	756 Adelaide St., London, Ont.
Robinson, E. H.	118 Spruce Hill Rd., Toronto, Ont.
Robinson, J. R.	468 Davis St., Sarnia, Ont.
Robinson, W. W. (M.M.)	Hampton Court Apts., 27 Avenue Rd., Toronto.
Rice, C. B.	Vancouver, B. C.
*Rickinson, T.	6391 Wilson St., Victoria, B. C.
Rose, C. F. (M.M.)	46 Munroe St., Toronto.
Rose, J. H.	46 Munroe St., Toronto.
Rose, J. T.	100 Farnham Ave., Toronto.
Rowland, H. F. (D.C.M.)	62 Elm Ave., Toronto.
Runnels, P. L.	Barrie Island, Ont.
Rutty, W.	Preston, Ont.
Ross, D. P.	St. George, Beauce, Que.
*Salisbury, W. A.	227 Lansdowne Ave., Toronto.
Salisbury, W. H.	Victoria, B. C.
Sanford, P. L.	Coldbrook, N. S.
Schulick, J.	Montreal, Que.
Soyle, T. H.	Antrim, Ont.
*Saunders, G. F.	Scranton, Pa., U. S. A.
Seely, R. E.	Hampton, N. B.
Shaw, H. F. (M.M.)	Care "Hamilton Spectator," Hamilton.
Seigle, M. W.	Bigg Valley, Alta.
Smith, D. M.	35 McPherson Ave., Toronto, Ont.

Battery Roll

Smith, J. B.	Hespeler, Ont.
Smith, S. B.	18 Wilson St., Guelph, Ont.
*Smith, F. N.	Hantsport, N. S.
Simpson, R. J.	174 Ferguson Ave., Hamilton.
Speares, S. C.	84 Seeton St., Toronto, Ont.
Speer, H. J.	Woodstock, N. B.
Spittal, C. T.	112 George St., Brantford, Ont.
*Snare, G.	Ingramport, N. S.
Stevenson, H. E.	69 Forbes Ave., Guelph, Ont.
Stokes, L. J.	503-8 A St. N. E., Calgary, Alta.
Sleigh, P. G.	5 Rosevere Ave. E., Toronto, Ont.
Sinn, A.	
Stone, R. S.	50 Mountain Ave., Hamilton.
Stemshorn, W.	141 Adam St., Montreal, Que.
Stewart, H. F.	Thamesville, Ont.
*Sullivan, J. (M.M.)	Metcalf.
Sutton, R. I.	3319 Lanarau Ave., Montreal.
Taylor, R.	Hamilton, Ont.
Theobald, R. F.	Box 476 Joliette, Que.
Theobald, F.	Campden, Ont.
Thompson, R.	350 Leslie St., Toronto, Ont.
*Thompson, W.	care Miss E. Thompson, Stouffville P.O., Ont.
Thompson, S. W.	92 Charles St. W., Toronto.
Thomas, J. E.	Cherryfield, Maine, U. S. A.
Tripp, J. H.	Bakersfield, Cal., U. S. A.
Turner, J. W.	654 Dundas St., Toronto.
Varey, J. M. (D.C.M.)	Meaford, Ont.
Vaughan, F.	60 French Ave., Toronto, Ont.
Vicars, G. F.	Uxbridge, Ont.
Vincent, J. A.	Harvey St., Peterboro, Ont.

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Walter, R.	40 Asquith Ave., Toronto, Ont.
Watson, A.	9 Adams Ave., Toronto.
Wallace, J. W.	Mount Dennis, Ont.
Washbrooke, E. V.	130 Goyeau St., Windsor, Ont.
Went, W. I. D.	Parry Sound, Ont.
White, W. R. (D.C.M.)	Myrtle Station, Ont.
Williams, O. S.	261 Albany Ave., Toronto.
Willett, F.	Port Colborne, Ont.
Williamson, C. E.	Stratford, Ont.
Williamson, C. W.	Stratford, Ont.
Wilson, J. J.	1008 College St., Toronto.
Wilson, J. A.	15 Maple Ave., Toronto.
Whorley, R. A.	Hailyborough, Ont.
Winter, L. M.	R. R. No. 3, Galt, Ont.
Wolven, A. W. (M.M.)	Newport, Mich., U. S. A.
Wylie, W. J.	Durham, Ont.
Young, R. A.	1101 Dufferin St., Toronto.
Young, H. C.	Sombra.

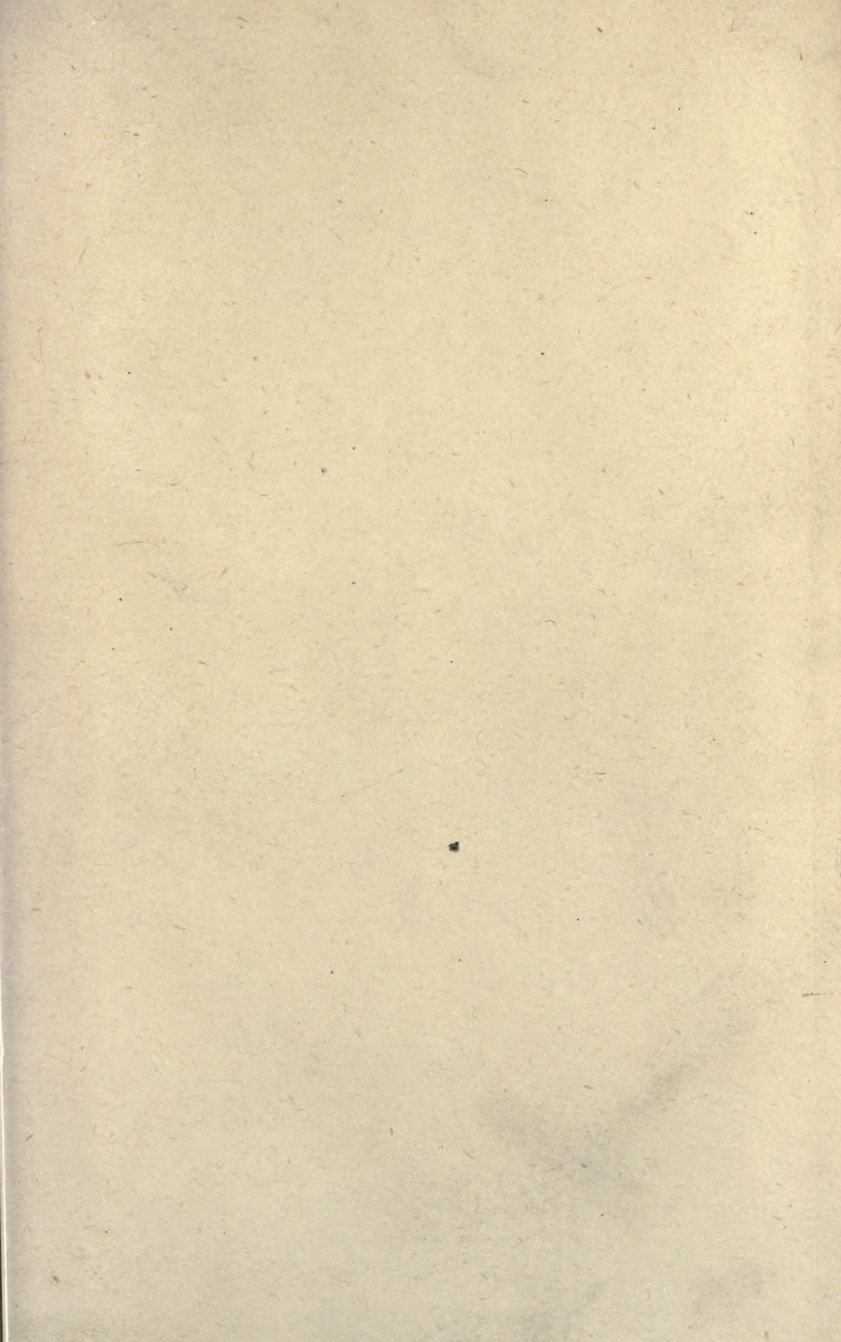
*Those marked with an asterick either gassed or wounded.

OFFICERS WHO HAVE SERVED WITH THE BATTERY

- *Major A. S. Dawes, M.C.Linton Apts., Sherbrooke St. W., Montreal.
- *Major A. W. W. KerrToronto, Ont.
- Major C. B. Hill, M.C. and barSockliffe, Ottawa, Ont.
- Lieut. H. L. Benallick77 O'Hearn Ave., Guelph, Ont.
- *Lieut. C. A. McMurtry98 Jamieson Ave., Toronto, Ont.
- Lieut. A. M. Montgomery, M.M.M.C..New Richmond, P. Q.
- *Lieut. H. B. Galpin98 Kent St., London, Ont.
- Lieut. H. A. Grant280 Beech Ave., Toronto.
- *Lieut. J. R. Wilson538 Huron St., Toronto.
- *Lieut. W. W. DavidsonToronto, Ont.
- Lieut. S. PickupGranville, N. S.
- Lieut. C. W. Tupper145 Middlegate, Armstrong's Pt., Winnipeg, Man.
- Lieut. TaylorHalifax, N. S.
- *Lieut. J. R. Curry71 Morris St., Halifax, N. S.

IN MEMORIAM

Major V. J. Kent	Killed in action	Lievin.
Lieut. Basil Lepper	Killed in action	Canal du Nord.
Bomb. J. H. Winslow	Killed in action	Cite Saint Pierre.
Bomb. D. M. McLennan	Killed in action	Cite Saint Pierre.
Signaller L. P. Clemens ...	Killed in action	Canal du Nord.
Driver A. Warwick	Killed in action	Amiens.
Driver W. H. Coulter	Died in hospital	Bramshott.
Driver J. S. McTague	Died	Crespin.
Driver R. J. Humphries	Died in hospital	Bonn.
Signaller W. J. Clendenning..	Died in hospital	Paris.





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